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THE WORKS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

VOL. IX.

THE

WORKS

OF

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN;

CONTAINING

SEVERAL POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL TRACTS

NOT INCLUDED IN ANY FORMER EDITION,

AND

MANY LETTERS OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE

NOT HITHERTO PUBLISHED;

WITH

NOTES

AND

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

By JARED SPARKS.

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CORRESPONDENCE,

PART THIRD;

COMPRISING

LETTERS PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL,

FROM

THE BEGINNING OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

TO

THE END OF THE AUTHOR'S MISSION TO FRANCE.

1775—1785.

(CONTINUED.)

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

The King of France grants to the United States a further Sum of Six Millions of Livres. — Declines the Mediation of Russia and Austria. — Dr. Franklin requests Permission of Congress to return Home.

Passy, 12 March, 1781.

SIR,

I had the honor of receiving on the 13th of last month your Excellency's letter of the 1st of January, together with the instructions of November 28th and December 27th, a copy of those to Colonel Laurens, and the letter to the King. I immediately drew a memorial, enforcing as strongly as I could the requests that are contained in that letter, and directed by the instructions, and I delivered the same with the letter, which were both well received; but, the ministry being extremely occupied with other weighty affairs, and I obtaining for some time only general answers, that something would be done for us, &c., and Mr. Laurens not arriving, I wrote again, and pressed strongly for a decision on the subject; that I might be able to write explicitly by this opportunity, what aids the Congress were, or were not, to expect; the regulation of their operations for the campaign depending on the information I should be enabled to give.

Upon this, I received a note, appointing Saturday last for a meeting with the minister, which I attended punctually. He assured me of the King's good will to the United States; remarking, however, that, being on the spot, I must be sensible of the great expense France was actually engaged in, and the difficulty of providing for it, which rendered the lending us twenty-five millions at present impracticable. But he informed me, that the letter from the Congress, and my memorials, had been under his Majesty's consideration; and observed, as to loans in general, that the sum we wanted to borrow in Europe was large, and that the depreciation of our paper had hurt our credit on this side of the water; adding, also, that the King could not possibly favor a loan for us in his dominions, because it would interfere with, and be a prejudice to, those he was under the necessity of obtaining himself to support the war; but that, to give the States a signal proof of his friendship, his Majesty had resolved to grant them the sum of six millions, not as a loan, but as a free gift. This sum, the minister informed me, was exclusive of the three millions, which he had before obtained for me, to pay the Congress drafts for interest, &c., expected in the current year.

He added, that, as it was understood the clothing, &c., with which our army had been heretofore supplied from France, was often of bad quality, and dear, the ministers would themselves take care of the purchase of such articles as should be immediately wanted, and send them over; and it was desired of me to look over the great invoice, that had been sent hither last year, and mark out those articles; that, as to the money remaining after such purchases, it was to be drawn for by General Washington, upon M. d'Harvelay, Garde du Trésor Royal, and the bills would be

duly honored; but it was desired they might be drawn gradually as the money should be wanted, and as much time given for the payment after sight as conveniently could be, that the payment might be more easy.

I assured the minister, that the Congress would be very sensible of this token of his Majesty's continued goodness towards the United States; but remarked, that it was not the usage with us for the general to draw, and proposed that it might be our treasurer, who should draw the bills for the remainder; but I was told, that it was his Majesty's order. And I afterwards understood, from the Secretary of the Council, that, as the sum was intended for the supply of the army, and could not be so large as we had demanded for general occasions, it was thought best to put it into the General's hands, that it might not get into those of the different boards or committees, who might think themselves under a necessity of diverting it to other purposes. There was no room to dispute on this point, every donor having the right of qualifying his gifts with such terms as he thinks proper.

I took with me the invoice; and, having examined it, I returned it immediately with a letter, of which a copy is enclosed; and I suppose its contents will be followed, unless Colonel Laurens on his arrival should make any changes. I hope he and Colonel Palfrey are safe, though, as yet, not heard of.*

After the discourse relating to the aid was ended, the minister proceeded to inform me, that the courts of Petersburg and Vienna had offered their mediation;

* Colonel William Palfrey, for some time paymaster-general of the Continental army, had been appointed consul-general to France by Congress, but was lost at sea on his passage.

that the King had answered, that it would to him personally be agreeable, but that he could not yet accept it, because he had allies whose concurrence was necessary; and that his Majesty desired I would acquaint the Congress with this offer and answer, and urge their sending such instructions as they may think proper to their plenipotentiary, it being not doubted that they would readily accept the proposed mediation, from their own sense of its being both useful and necessary. I mentioned, that I supposed Mr. Adams was already furnished with instructions relating to any treaty of peace, that might be proposed.

I must now beg leave to say something relating to myself; a subject with which I have not often troubled the Congress. I have passed my seventy-fifth year, and I find that the long and severe fit of the gout, which I had the last winter, has shaken me exceedingly, and I am yet far from having recovered the bodily strength I before enjoyed. I do not know that my mental faculties are impaired; perhaps I shall be the last to discover that; but I am sensible of great diminution in my activity, a quality I think particularly necessary in your minister for this court. I am afraid, therefore, that your affairs may some time or other suffer by my deficiency. I find also, that the business is too heavy for me, and too confining. The constant attendance at home, which is necessary for receiving and accepting your bills of exchange (a matter foreign to my ministerial functions), to answer letters, and perform other parts of my employment, prevents my taking the air and exercise, which my annual journeys formerly used to afford me, and which contributed much to the preservation of my health. There are many other little personal attentions, which the infirmities of age render necessary to an old man's comfort, even in

some degree to the continuance of his existence, and with which business often interferes.

I have been engaged in public affairs, and enjoyed public confidence, in some shape or other, during the long term of fifty years, and honor sufficient to satisfy any reasonable ambition; and I have no other left but that of repose, which I hope the Congress will grant me, by sending some person to supply my place. At the same time, I beg they may be assured, that it is not any the least doubt of their success in the glorious cause, nor any disgust received in their service, that induces me to decline it, but purely and simply the reasons above mentioned. And, as I cannot at present undergo the fatigues of a sea voyage (the last having been almost too much for me), and would not again expose myself to the hazard of capture and imprisonment in this time of war, I purpose to remain here at least till the peace; perhaps it may be for the remainder of my life; and, if any knowledge or experience I have acquired here may be thought of use to my successor, I shall freely communicate it, and assist him with any influence I may be supposed to have, or counsel that may be desired of me.*

I have one request more to make, which, if I have served the Congress to their satisfaction, I hope they will not refuse me; it is, that they will be pleased to take under their protection my grandson, William Temple Franklin. I have educated him from his infancy,

* In a letter to the President of Congress, dated at Madrid, April 25th, 1781, Mr. Jay said; "I perceive Dr. Franklin desires to retire. This circumstance calls upon me to assure Congress, that I have reason to be perfectly satisfied with his conduct towards me, and that I have received from him all the aid and attention I could wish or expect. His character is very high here, and I really believe that the respectability, which he enjoys throughout Europe, has been of general use to our cause and country."

and I brought him over with an intention of placing him where he might be qualified for the profession of the law; but the constant occasion I had for his services as a private secretary during the time of the Commissioners, and more extensively since their departure, has induced me to keep him always with me; and indeed, being continually disappointed of the secretary Congress had at different times intended me, it would have been impossible for me, without this young gentleman's assistance, to have gone through the business incumbent on me. He has therefore lost so much of the time necessary for law studies, that I think it rather advisable for him to continue, if it may be, in the line of public foreign affairs; for which he seems qualified by a sagacity and judgment above his years, and great diligence and activity, exact probity, a genteel address, a facility in speaking well the French tongue, and all the knowledge of business to be obtained by a four years' constant employment in the secretary's office, where he may be said to have served a kind of apprenticeship.

After all the allowance I am capable of making for the partiality of a parent to his offspring, I cannot but think he may in time make a very able foreign minister for Congress, in whose service his fidelity may be relied on. But I do not at present propose him as such, for though he is now of age, a few years more of experience will not be amiss. In the mean time, if they should think fit to employ him as a secretary to their minister at any European court, I am persuaded they will have reason to be satisfied with his conduct, and I shall be thankful for his appointment, as a favor to me.

My accounts have been long ready for the examination of some person to be appointed for that purpose.

Mr. Johnson having declined it, and Mr. Dana residing at present at Paris, I requested him to undertake it, and to examine at the same time those of Mr. Deane; but he also declines it, as being unacquainted with accounts. If no fresh appointment has been made by Congress, I think of desiring Mr. Palfrey to perform that service when he arrives, which I hope will be approved, for I am uneasy at the delay. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY.

Account of the Squadron and Expedition of Paul Jones. — Disposition of the Prizes. — Captain Landais.

Passy, 17 March, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,

I received the honor of yours, dated January the 2d, containing sundry questions relating to the ship *Alliance*, and the expedition under the command of John Paul Jones.

I apprehend, that the letters and papers sent by the *Alliance*, if they came to your hands, and those which went in the *Ariel*, taken together, would pretty well inform you on the most of the particulars you inquire about; and the deficiencies might be supplied by Captain Jones himself, and others, who were engaged in the expedition. But, as I learn from Colonel Laurens, that his arrival was not heard of at Boston the 11th of February, though he sailed the 18th of December, and possibly he may have miscarried, I shall endeavour to answer as well as I can your several queries,

and will hereafter send you duplicates of the papers that may be lost.

But I would previously remark, as to the expedition in general, that this court, having, I suppose, some enterprise in view, which Captain Jones, who had signalized his bravery in taking the *Drake*, was thought a proper person to conduct, had soon after that action requested we would spare him to them, which was the more readily agreed to, as a difference subsisted between him and his lieutenant, which laid us under a difficulty, that was by that means got over. Some time passed, however, before any steps were taken to employ him in a manner agreeable to him, and possibly the first project was laid aside, many difficulties attending any attempt of introducing a foreign officer into the French marine, as it disturbs the order of their promotions, &c., and he himself choosing to act rather under the commission of Congress. However, a project was at length formed of furnishing him with some of the King's ships, the officers of which were to have temporary American commissions, which being posterior in date to his commission, would put them naturally under his command for the time; and the final intention, after various changes, was to intercept the Baltic fleet.

The *Alliance* was at that time under orders to carry Mr. Adams back to America; but the minister of the marine, by a written letter requesting I would lend her to strengthen the little squadron, and offering a passage for Mr. Adams in one of the King's ships, I consented to the request, hoping, that, besides obliging the minister, I might obtain the disposition of some prisoners to exchange for our countrymen in England.

Question 1st. "Whether the ships with which the frigate *Alliance* was concerted in an expedition, of

which Captain John Paul Jones had the command, were the property of private persons, and if so, who were the owners of those ships?"

Answer. The ships with which the *Alliance* was concerted, were, 1st, the *Bon Homme Richard*, bought and fitted by the King, on purpose for Captain Jones; 2dly, the *Pallas* frigate; 3dly, the *Vengeance*, a corvette; 4thly, the *Cerf*, a cutter; all belonging to the King, and the property of no private person whatever, as far as I have ever heard or believe.

Two privateers, the *Monsieur* and the *Granville*, were indeed with the little squadron in going out; I suppose to take advantage of the convoy; but, being on their own account, and at their own discretion, the *Monsieur* quitted company on the coast of Ireland, and the *Granville* returned about the same time to France. I have not heard, that the *Monsieur* ever claimed any part of the prizes. The *Granville* has made some claim, on account, not only of what were taken while she was with the squadron, but of the whole taken after her departure, on this pretence, that, some prisoners being put on board of her, and losing company, she found herself obliged to go back with them, not having wherewith to maintain them, &c.; but this claim is opposed by the other ships, being regarded as frivolous, as she was not concerted. The claim, however, is not yet decided, but hangs in the courts. These circumstances show, that these vessels were not considered as a part of the armament. But it appears more plainly by the *concordat* of the captains, whereof I send you a copy. Who the owners were of those privateers I have not heard. I suppose they may be inhabitants of Bordeaux and Granville.

Question 2d. "Whether any agreement was made by you, or any person in your behalf, with the owners

of the ships concerted with the *Alliance* in that expedition, respecting the shares they were severally to draw of the prizes, which might be taken during said expedition?"

Answer. I never made any such agreement, nor any person in my behalf. I lent the vessel to the King simply at the minister's request, supposing it would be agreeable to Congress to oblige their ally, and that the division, if there should be any thing to divide, would be according to the laws of France, or of America, as should be found most equitable. But the captains, before they sailed, entered into an agreement, called the *concordat* above mentioned, to divide according to the rules of America, as they acted under American commissions and colors.

Question 3d. "Whether the *Serapis* and *Scarborough*, and other captures made during said expedition, were divided among the captors, and the distribution made according to the resolutions of Congress, and, if not, what mode was pursued in making the distribution?"

Answer. No division has yet been made of the *Serapis* and *Scarborough*. It is but lately that I have heard of the money being ready for division at L'Orient. I suppose the mode will be that agreed on by the captains.

Question 4th. "What were the net proceeds of the *Serapis*, *Scarborough*, and the other prizes taken during the said expedition?"

Answer. I have not yet heard what were the net proceeds of the prizes, nor have I seen any account. As soon as such shall come to my hands, I will transmit it to you, and will endeavour to obtain it speedily. No satisfaction has yet been obtained for the prizes carried into Norway, and delivered up by the King of Denmark.

Question 5th. "What benefit the United States of America have received from the prisoners made during said expedition?"

Answer. I did expect to have had all the prisoners taken by the squadron, to exchange for Americans, in consideration of my having lent the *Alliance;* and Captain Pearson engaged in behalf of the British government by a written instrument, that those set on shore in Holland should be considered as prisoners of war to the United States, and exchanged accordingly. But I was, nevertheless, disappointed in this expectation. For, an exchange of all the prisoners being proposed to be made in Holland, it was found necessary at that time by the Dutch government, in order to avoid embroiling their State with England, that those prisoners should be considered as taken by France, and they were accordingly exchanged for Frenchmen, on the footing of the French cartel with England. This I agreed to on the request of the French ambassador at the Hague, and also to avoid the risk of sending them by sea to France (the English cruising with seven ships off the Texel to retake them), and as it would be more convenient and certain for us to have an equal number of English delivered to me by France, at or near Morlaix, to be sent over in the cartel. But the English government afterwards refused, very unjustly, to give any Americans in exchange for English, that had not been taken by Americans. So we did not reap the benefit we hoped for.

Question 6th. "What orders were given to Captain Landais?"

Answer. That he should obey the orders of Captain Jones.

Question 7th. "What was the ground of dispute between Captain Jones and him?"

Answer. That, when at sea together, he refused to obey Captain Jones's orders.

Question 8th. "What were the disbursements on the *Alliance*, from the time of her first arrival in France, until she left that kingdom?"

Answer. The disbursements on the *Alliance*, from the time of her first arrival in France, till the commencement of the cruise under Captain Jones, as appears by the accounts of Mr. Schweighauser, agent appointed by William Lee, amounted to , which I paid. The disbursements on her refit in Holland were paid by the King, as were also those on her second refit after her return to L'Orient, as long as she was under the care of Captain Jones. But Captain Landais, when he resumed the command of her, thought fit to take what he wanted of Mr. Schweighauser's agent, to the amount of 31,668 livres, 12s. 3d., for which, being contrary to my orders given to Mr. Schweighauser, on his asking them upon the occasion, I refused to pay (my correspondence with him will show you my reasons), and of those paid by the King I have no account.

Question 9th. "Why the *Alliance* lay so long at Port L'Orient, after her arrival there from the Texel, and in general every information in your power respecting the *Alliance* and the expedition referred to."

Answer. Her lying so long at L'Orient was first occasioned by the mutinous disposition of the officers and men, who refused to raise the anchors till they should receive wages and prize money. I did not conceive they had a right to demand payment of wages in a foreign country, or anywhere but at the port they came from, no one here knowing on what terms they were engaged, what they had received, or what was due to them. The prize money I wished them to

have; but, as that could not soon be obtained, I thought it wrong in them to detain the vessel on that account; and, as I was informed many of them were in want of necessaries, I advanced twenty-four thousand livres on account, and put it into Captain Jones's hands to relieve and pacify them, that they might go more willingly. But they were encouraged by some meddling passengers to persist. The King would have taken the prizes and paid for them, at the rate *per gun, &c.*, as he pays for warlike vessels taken by his ships; but they raised a clamor at this, it being put into their heads, that it was a project for cheating them, and they demanded a sale by auction. The minister, who usually gives more when ships are taken for the King than they will produce by auction, readily consented to this when I asked it of him; but then this method required time to have them inventoried, advertised in different ports, to create a fuller concurrence of buyers, &c. Captain Jones came up to Paris to hasten the proceedings. In his absence, Captain Landais, by the advice of Mr. Lee and Commodore Gillon, took possession of the ship and kept her long, writing up to Paris, waiting answers, &c.

I have often mentioned to Congress the inconvenience of putting their vessels under the care of persons living perhaps one hundred leagues from the port they arrive at, which necessarily creates delays, and of course enormous expenses; and, for a remedy, I have as often recommended the appointment of consuls, being very sensible of my own insufficiency in maritime affairs, which have taken up a vast deal of my time, and given me abundance of trouble, to the hinderance, sometimes, of more important business. I hope these inconveniences will now be soon removed by the arrival of Mr. Palfrey.

As the ministry had reasons, if some of the first plans had been pursued, to wish the expedition might be understood as American, the instructions were to be given by me, and the outfit was committed to M. de Chaumont, known to be one of our friends, and well acquainted with such affairs. The Marquis de Lafayette, who was to have been concerned in the execution, can probably acquaint you with those reasons. If not, I shall do it hereafter. It afterwards continued in the hands of M. de Chaumont to the end. I never paid or received a farthing directly or indirectly on account of the expedition; and, the captains having made him their trustee and agent, it is to him they are to apply for their proportions of the captures. There may be something, though I believe very little, coming to the United States from the *Alliance's* share of a small ransom made contrary to orders.

No account has been rendered to me of that ransom, therefore I cannot say how much; but I will inquire about it and inform you hereafter.

Most of the colliers taken were burnt or sunk. The ships of war taken, I understand, belong wholly to the captors. If any particulars remain, on which you desire information, be pleased to mention them. I think it my duty to give you all the satisfaction in my power, and shall do it willingly. Being with great regard, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM HODGSON.

Conduct of Mr. Digges. — Peace. — Proposals of Mediation.

Passy, 1 April, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received your respected favor of the 20th past, and am shocked exceedingly at the account you give me of Digges. He that robs the rich even of a single guinea is a villain; but what is he who can break his sacred trust, by robbing a poor man and a prisoner of eighteen pence given in charity for his relief, and repeat that crime as often as there are weeks in a winter, and multiply it by robbing as many poor men every week as make up the number of near six hundred? We have no name in our language for such atrocious wickedness. If such a fellow is not damned, it is not worth while to keep a devil.*

I am sorry you have been obliged to advance money. I desired Mr. Grand, some time since, to order two

* Mr. Hodgson had written as follows. "I have just received yours of the 8th instant, which surprises me not a little, as by the letter enclosed I perceive the person to whom that letter is addressed has deceived you most egregiously. He has not advanced one shilling that has come to my knowledge. He had indeed wrote to Portsmouth and Plymouth, to order a distribution of one shilling and six pence a week to the prisoners. I was informed of it by the agents at both places; but, although he gave those directions, he did not provide the necessary funds. I thought it therefore right to caution both Mr. Wren and Mr. Heath against advancing money, and advised them to say, that they should be glad to serve the prisoners, but that it was just that the money should be sent to them; and indeed I have been obliged to reimburse to one of those persons twenty-five pounds, and to the other twenty pounds, which they had before advanced to Mr. Digges, and could not procure the payment of; and this I did, partly out of a bill he gave me last year on Mr. Grand for forty-eight pounds, although twenty pounds of that sum were for money I had lent him in the spring of 1780. I fear all is not right. He has been absent from

hundred pounds to be paid you in London. If that is not done, draw on him for the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds, payable at thirty days' sight, and your bill shall be duly honored.

I enclose a copy of Digges's last letter to me, in which he acknowledges the drafts made on me, (omitting one of seventy-five pounds,) and pretends, that he only draws as he is drawn upon by his friends, who hand the money to the prisoners, and that those friends are almost tired of the charitable employment, but he encourages them, &c. Be so good as to let them know of this letter.

I wish, with you and with all good men, for peace; proposals of mediation have been made, but the effect is yet uncertain. I shall be mindful of your request, and you may depend on my doing any thing in my power that may be serviceable to you. With sincere esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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town some time. The last I heard of him was from Bristol, where he was about purchasing goods for Lisbon." — *London, May 20th*, 1781.

Extract from a letter written by Dr. Franklin to Mr. Jay, dated Passy, August 20th, 1781. — "Digges, a Maryland merchant, residing in London, who pretended to be a zealous American, and to have much concern for our poor people in the English prisons, drew upon me for their relief at different times last winter to the amount of four hundred and ninety-five pounds sterling, which he said had been drawn for upon him by the gentlemen at Portsmouth and Plymouth, who had the care of the distribution. To my utter astonishment I have since learned, that the villain had not applied above thirty pounds of the money to that use, and that he has failed and absconded."

TO FRANCIS DANA.

Respecting Mr. Dana's Mission to the Court of St. Petersburg.

Passy, 7 April, 1781.

SIR,

I received the letter you yesterday did me the honor of writing to me,* requesting my opinion, in writing, relative to the conference you had with his Excellency the Count de Vergennes, last Wednesday, I being present; and also as to the expediency of your proceeding to St. Petersburg; which request I willingly comply with, as follows.

Question 1. "Whether, on the whole, I conceived the Count to have any objections to the mission itself?"

Answer. He did not make any such objections, nor did he drop any expression, by which it might be supposed he had any such in his mind.

Question 2. "Whether I considered his reflections upon the subject to be rather intended as cautions and advice to you, respecting the conduct he wished you to hold in the business?"

Answer. His Excellency expressed his apprehensions, that, if you went thither under a public character before the disposition of the Court was known, and its consent obtained, it might be thought improper, and be attended with inconvenience; and, if I remember right, he intimated the propriety of your consulting the ambassador at the Hague.

Question 3. "Whether I supposed him finally to make any real objections to your going to St. Petersburg, in the character only of a private American gen-

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. VIII. p. 268.

tleman, and there waiting the favorable moment of opening your eventual character?"

Answer. His objections were, that, though you should not avow your public character, yet, if known to be an American, who had been in public employ, it would be suspected that you had such a character, and the British minister there might exert himself to procure you "*quelques désagréments*," that is, chagrins or mortifications; and that, unless you appeared to have some other object in visiting St. Petersburg, your being an American would alone give strong grounds for such suspicions. But, when you mentioned, that you might appear to have views of commerce, as a merchant, or of curiosity as a traveller, &c.; that there was a gentleman at St. Petersburg with whom some in America had a correspondence, and who had given hints of the utility there might be in having an American in Russia, who could give true intelligence of the state of our affairs, and prevent or refute misrepresentations, &c.; and that you could, perhaps, by means of that gentleman, make acquaintance, and thence procure useful information of the state of commerce, the country, the court, &c., he seemed less to disapprove of your going directly.

As to my own opinion, which you require, though I have long imagined that we let ourselves down, in offering our alliance before it is desired, and that it would have been better if we had never issued commissions for ministers to the courts of Spain, Vienna, Prussia, Tuscany, or Holland, till we had first privately learned, whether they would be received, since a refusal from one is an actual slight, that lessens our reputation, and makes others less willing to form a connexion with us; yet, since your commission is given, and the Congress seem to expect, though I think they

do not absolutely require, that you should proceed to St. Petersburg immediately, I conceive, that (assuming only a private character for the present, as you propose,) it will be right for you to go, unless, on consulting Mr. Adams, you should find reason to judge, that, under the present circumstances of the proposed mediation, a delay for some time would be more advisable. With great esteem, and best wishes for your success, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Difficulty of procuring a Loan in Holland.

Leyden, 10 April, 1781.

SIR,

Relying on your virtues and graces of faith and hope, I accepted the bills to the amount of ten thousand pounds sterling drawn in favor of Mr. Tracy. I have received advice from Congress of more bills drawn upon me. When they arrive, and are presented, I must write to you concerning them, and desire you to enable me to discharge them; for I am sorry to say, that, although I have opened a loan according to the best plan I could devise, and the plan and the loan seem to be countenanced by the public, yet there is little money obtained, scarcely enough to defray the expense of obligations and stamps; and it is more and more clear to me, that we shall never obtain a loan here, until our independence is acknowledged by the States. Till then, every man seems to be afraid, that his having any thing to do in it will be made a foundation of a criminal process, or a provocation to the resentment of the mob.

The time is very near, when some of the bills I have accepted become payable. I must entreat your Excellency's answer to this as soon as convenient, and to point out to me, whether you choose that the House of Fizeau, Grand, & Co, or any other, should pay the money. It is a most grievous mortification to me, to find that America has no credit here, while England certainly still has so much; and to find that no gentlemen in public life here dare return me a visit or answer me a letter, even those who treated me when I first arrived here with great politeness. I am entreated, however, to keep this secret, but have no motive to secrete it from you. On the contrary, you ought to know it. I am told, that there will be great alterations very soon; but I have seen by experience, that no man in this country knows what will be on the morrow.

Let me ask the favor of you, Sir, to give my best respects to Colonel Laurens and Mr. Franklin. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, Sir, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Dr. Franklin's Enemies in America.

Passy, 12 April, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor by M. Cabarrus, and should have been glad if I could have rendered him any service here. He appears an amiable man, and expert in affairs. I have also your obliging letters of the 28th of February, and the 12th and 30th of March. I thank you much for your friendly hints of the operations of my enemies, and of the means I might use

to defeat them. Having in view at present no other point to gain but that of rest, I do not take their malice so much amiss, as it may farther my project, and perhaps be some advantage to you. —— and —— are open, and, so far, honorable enemies; the ——, if enemies, are more covered. I never did any of them the least injury, and can conceive no other source of their malice but envy. To be sure, the excessive respect shown me here by all ranks of people, and the little notice taken of them, was a mortifying circumstance; but it was what I could neither prevent or remedy. Those who feel pain at seeing others enjoy pleasure, and are unhappy, must meet daily with so many causes of torment, that I conceive them to be already in a state of damnation; and, on that account, I ought to drop all resentment with regard to those two gentlemen. But I cannot help being concerned at the mischief their ill tempers will be continually doing in our public affairs, whenever they have any concern in them.

I remember the maxim you mention of Charles the Fifth, *Yo y el Tiempo;* and have somewhere met with an answer to it in this distich,

> "I and Time 'gainst any two,
> Chance and I 'gainst Time and you."

And I think the gentlemen you have at present to deal with, would do wisely to guard a little more against certain chances.

The price of the *Bibliotheca Hispana* is too high for me. I thank you for the *Gazettes* you sent me by the ambassador's courier. I received none by the last. I shall be exceedingly glad to receive the memoirs of the *Sociedad Económica*, and the works on political economy of its founder. The Prince of Maceran, with several other persons of his nation, did me the

honor of breakfasting with me on Monday last, when I presented the compliments you charged me with. Mr. Cumberland has not yet arrived at Paris, as far as I have heard.

The discontents in our army have been quieted. There was in them not the least disposition of revolting to the enemy. I thank you for the Maryland captain's news, which I hope will be confirmed. They have heard something of it in England, as you will see by the papers, and are very uneasy about it, as well as about their news from the East Indies. Yours affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.*

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* On the 12th of April, 1781, Dr. Franklin was entertained in a somewhat remarkable manner, at a *Fête Champêtre* given by the Countess d'Houdetot, at Sanoy, in the valley of Montmorency, twelve miles from Paris. The company consisted only of the different branches of the family of the Count and Countess d'Houdetot. To understand one of the stanzas, it is necessary to know that the Countess's name was Sophie. When the approach of Dr. Franklin's carriage was announced, they all set off on foot from the Château, and met him at the distance of about half a mile. He was handed from his carriage by the Countess, who, upon his alighting, pronounced the following verses of her own composition.

"Ame du héros, et du sage,
Oh liberté! premier bienfait des dieux!
Hélas! c'est de trop loin que nous t'offrons des vœux;
Ce n'est qu'en soupirant que nous rendons hommage
Au mortel qui forma des citoyens heureux."

They walked slowly to the Château, where they sat down to a splendid dinner. At the first glass of wine, the following stanza was sung, which became the chorus of the day, accompanied by instrumental music.

"De Benjamin célébrons la mémoire,
Chantons le bien qu'il a fait aux mortels;
En Amérique il aura des autels,
Et dans Sanoy nous buvons à sa gloire."

At the second glass, the Countess sang the following quatrain.

"Il rend ses droits à l'humaine nature,
Pour l'affranchir il voulut l'éclairer,

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 29 April, 1781.

I enclose you extracts of two letters ministerial, found in the same packet with the former, written in the fond belief that the States were on the point of submitting, and cautioning the commissioners for peace

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Et la vertu, pour se faire adorer,
De Benjamin emprunta la figure."

At the third glass, the Viscount d'Houdetot sang;

"Guillaume Tell fut brave, mais sauvage;
J'estime plus notre cher Benjamin;
De l'Amérique en fixant le destin,
A table il rit, et c'est là le vrai sage."

At the fourth, the Viscountess sang;

"Je dis aussi, vive Philadelphie!
L'indépendance a de quoi me tenter;
Dans ce pays je voudrais habiter,
Quoiqu'il n'y ait ni bal ni comédie."

At the fifth, Madame de Pernan;

"Tous nos enfants apprendront de leurs mères
A vous aimer, vous croire et vous bénir;
Vous enseignez ce qui peut réunir
Tous les humains dans les bras d'un seul père."

At the sixth, Count de Tressan;

"Vive Sanoy! C'est ma Philadelphie
Lorsque j'y vois son cher législateur;
J'y rajeunis dans le sein du bonheur,
J'y ris, j'y bois, et j'écoute Sophie."

At the seventh, the Count d'Apché;

"Pour soutenir cette charte sacrée
Qu'Edouard accorda aux Anglais,
Je sens qu'il n'est de chevalier Français
Qui ne désire employer son épée."

Dinner being ended, Dr. Franklin was led by the Countess, accompanied by the whole family, into the gardens of Sanoy, where, under a rural arbor, he was presented by the gardener with a Virginia locust

not to promise too much respecting the future constitutions. They are indeed cautiously worded, but easily understood, when explained by two court maxims or assertions, the one of Lord Granville's, late President of the Council, that *the King is the legislator of the colonies;* the other of the present Chancellor, when in the House of Commons, that *the Quebec constitution was the only proper constitution for colonies,*

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tree, which, at the request of the company, he planted with his own hands. The Countess at the same time repeated the following verses, which have been engraven on a marble pillar in the neighbourhood of that tree.

"Arbre sacré, durable monument
Du séjour qu'en ces lieux a daigné faire un sage,
De ces jardins devenu l'ornement,
Recevez-y le juste hommage
De nos vœux et de notre encens;
Et puissiez-vous dans tous les âges,
A jamais respecté du temps,
Vivre autant que son nom, ses lois et ses ouvrages."

On their return, they were met by a band of music, which accompanied the whole family in the following song.

"Que cet arbre, planté par sa main bienfaisante,
Elevant sa tige naissante
Au dessus du stérile ormeau,
Par sa fleur odoriférante,
Parfume l'air de cet heureux hameau.
La foudre ne pourra l'atteindre,
Elle respectera son faîte et ses rameaux;
Franklin nous enseigna par ses heureux travaux
A la diriger ou à l'éteindre,
Tandis qu'il détruisait des maux
Pour la terre encore plus à plaindre."

After which they all proceeded to the Château. Towards evening Dr. Franklin was reconducted by the whole company to his carriage, and, before the door was shut, the Countess pronounced the following complimentary verses composed by herself.

"Législateur d'un monde, et bienfaiteur des deux,
L'homme dans tous les temps te devra ses hommages;
Et je m'acquitte dans ces lieux
De la dette de tous les âges."

ought to have been given to them all when first planted, and what all ought now to be reduced to. We may hence see the danger of listening to any of their deceitful propositions, though piqued by the negligence of some of those European powers, who will be much benefited by our revolution. I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 4 May, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

It is so long since I heard from you, that I begin to fear you are ill. Pray write to me, and let me know the state of your health. I enclose Morgan's account of his engagement with Tarleton. If he has not already received it, it may be agreeable to our friend the gazetteer of Leyden. Every thing goes well here, and I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM MISS GEORGIANA SHIPLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 6 May, 1781.

Your dear, delightful letter made me most happy, particularly your account of yourself, as it proves that you are in good spirits, and pleased with your present situation. Your *Dialogue with the Gout* is written with your own cheerful pleasantry, and *La belle et la mauvaise Jambe** recalls to my mind those happy hours we once passed in your society, where we were never

* See Vol II. pp. 185, 194.

amused without learning some useful truth, and where I first acquired a taste *pour la conversation badinante et réfléchie.*

It is long since I have written to my ever valued friend; but the difficulty I find in conveying my letters safe to Passy is the only motive for my silence. Strange, that I should be under the necessity of concealing from the world a correspondence, which it is the pride and glory of my heart to maintain.

We have spent three months in London, but leave it to-morrow, that we may enjoy the beauties of a late spring at Twyford. My father grows every year fonder of that peaceful retirement; having found his endeavours to serve his country ineffectual, he yields to a torrent, which it is no longer in his power to oppose. I will confess, that, although I love reading and drawing sufficiently never to want amusement in the country, yet I have some few friends in town from whom I shall part with regret. We live very little in public, but a great deal with small private societies. They are the charm of life.

I have inquired after Mr. Small, but hitherto my inquiries have proved unsuccessful. Sir John Pringle has left London, and is gone to reside wholly in Scotland. I fear he is much straitened in his circumstances; he looks ill, and is vastly changed from what you remember him. Dr. Priestley is now on a short visit to his friends in town. I find he is settled much to his satisfaction at Birmingham, where he has the care of a pretty numerous congregation. Good Dr. Price calls on us often, and gives us hopes of a visit to Twyford. We value him no less on his own account, than for his steady attachment to our respectable friend.

The first opportunity we have of sending a parcel

to Paris, you may expect *all* our shades. You flatter us vastly by desiring them, as well as by every expression of esteem and affection for a family who know how to value *your* praise. Mr. Jones has undertaken the care of this letter. I feel grateful to him for giving me an opportunity of assuring you how much I *do* and ever *shall* continue to love you.

GEORGIANA SHIPLEY.

TO COURT DE GEBELIN.*

Indian Languages. — Mariner's Compass.

Passy, 7 May, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I am glad the little book† proved acceptable. It does not appear to me intended for a grammar to teach the language. It is rather what we call in English a *spelling book*, in which the only method observed is, to arrange the words according to their number of syllables, placing those of one syllable together, then those of two syllables, and so on. And it is to be

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* Antoine Court de Gebelin, born at Nismes, in 1725, of a Protestant family, became a minister in that communion, first in the Cevennes, and next at Lausanne; which, however, he quitted, together with the clerical function, for the profession of literature at Paris, where he acquired so great a reputation as an antiquary and philologer, that he was appointed to superintend one of the museums. He lost much of his reputation, however, by his enthusiastic zeal in favor of animal magnetism. He died at Paris, May 13th, 1784. His great work is entitled, "*Monde Primitif, analysé et comparé avec le Monde Moderne*," nine volumes in quarto. The excellence of his character may be appreciated from the single fact, that, on quitting Switzerland, he voluntarily gave to his sister the principal part of his patrimony, reserving little for himself, and depending for a maintenance upon the exercise of his talents. — W. T. F.

† A Vocabulary of the language of one of the Indian tribes in North America.

observed, that *Sa ki ma*, for instance, is not three words, but one word of three syllables; and the reason that *hyphens* are not placed between the syllables is, that the printer had not enough of them.

As the Indians had no letters, they had no orthography. The Delaware language being differently spelt from the Virginian may not always arise from a difference in the languages; for strangers who learn the language of an Indian nation, finding no orthography, are at liberty in writing the language to use such compositions of letters as they think will best produce the sounds of the words. I have observed, that our Europeans of different nations, who learn the same Indian language, form each his own orthography according to the usual sounds given to the letters in his own language. Thus the same words of the Mohawk language written by an English, a French, and a German interpreter, often differ very much in the spelling; and, without knowing the usual powers of the letters in the language of the interpreter, one cannot come at the pronunciation of the Indian words. The spelling book in question was, I think, written by a German.

You mention a Virginian Bible. Is it not the Bible of the Massachusetts language, translated by Eliot, and printed in New England, about the middle of the last century? I know this Bible, but have never heard of one in the Virginian language. Your observations of the similitude between many of the words, and those of the ancient world, are indeed very curious.

This inscription, which you find to be Phenician, is, I think, near *Taunton* (not *Jannston*, as you write it). There is some account of it in the old *Philosophical Transactions*. I have never been at the place, but shall be glad to see your remarks on it.

The compass appears to have been long known in China, before it was known in Europe; unless we suppose it known to Homer, who makes the Prince, that lent ships to Ulysses, boast that they had a *spirit* in them, by whose directions they could find their way in a cloudy day, or the darkest night. If any Phenicians arrived in America, I should rather think it was not by the accident of a storm, but in the course of their long and adventurous voyages; and that they coasted from Denmark and Norway, over to Greenland, and down southward by Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, &c., to New England; as the Danes themselves certainly did some ages before Columbus.

Our new American Society will be happy in the correspondence you mention, and when it is possible for me, I shall be glad to attend the meetings of your Society,* which I am sure must be very instructive. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Expedition against Arnold. — British Policy. — Colonel Laurens.

Passy, 14 May, 1781

DEAR SIR,

You are a very good correspondent, which I do not deserve, as I am a bad one. The truth is, I have too much business upon my hands, a great deal of it foreign to my function as a minister, which interferes with my writing regularly to my friends. But I am nevertheless extremely sensible of your kindness in

* L'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres.

sending me such frequent and full intelligence of the state of affairs on your side of the water, and in letting me see by your letters, that your health continues, as well as your zeal for our cause and country.

I hope, that by this time the ship, which has the honor of bearing your name, is safely arrived. She carries clothing for nearly twenty thousand men, with arms, ammunition, &c., which will supply some of your wants; and Colonel Laurens will bring a considerable addition, if Providence favors his passage. You will receive from him the particulars, which makes my writing more fully by him unnecessary.

You mention my having enemies in America. You are luckier, for I think you have none here, nor anywhere. Your friends have heard of your being gone against the traitor Arnold, and are anxious to hear of your success, and that you have brought him to punishment. Enclosed is a copy of a letter from his agent in England, captured by one of our cruisers, and by which the price or reward he received for his treachery may be guessed at. Judas sold only one man, Arnold three millions. Judas got for his one man thirty pieces of silver, Arnold not a halfpenny a head. A miserable bargain! especially when one considers the quantity of infamy he has acquired to himself, and entailed on his family.*

The English are in a fair way of gaining still more enemies; they play a desperate game. Fortune may favor them, as it sometimes does a drunken dicer; but

* The letter here mentioned was from a banker in London to General Arnold, stating that he had received from him bills to the amount of five thousand pounds sterling, which the banker said he had invested in the stocks. This was supposed to be the money paid to Arnold as the reward of his treachery. After the war, a pension was likewise granted to each of his children.

by their tyranny in the East, they have at length roused the powers there against them, and I do not know that they have in the West a single friend. If they lose their India commerce (which is one of their present great supports), and one battle at sea, their credit is gone, and their power follows. Thus empires, by pride, folly, and extravagance, ruin themselves like individuals. M. de la Motte Piquet has snatched from between their teeth a good deal of their West India prey, having taken twenty-two sail of their homeward bound prizes. One of our American privateers has taken two more, and brought them into Brest, and two were burnt; there were thirty-four in company, with two men-of-war of the line and two frigates, who saved themselves by flight, but we do not hear of their being yet got in.

I think it was a wise measure to send Colonel Laurens here, who could speak knowingly of the state of the army. It has been attended with all the success that perhaps could reasonably be expected, though not with all that was wished. He has fully justified your character of him, and returns thoroughly possessed of my esteem; but that cannot and ought not to please him so much, as a little more money would have done for his beloved army. This court continues firm and steady in its friendship, and does every thing it can for us. Can we not do a little more for ourselves? My successor (for I have desired the Congress to send me one) will find it in the best disposition towards us, and I hope he will take care to cultivate that disposition. You, who know the leading people of both countries, can perhaps judge better than any member of Congress of a person suitable for this station.

I wish you may be in a way to give your advice, when the matter is agitated in that assembly. I have

been long tired of the trade of minister, and wished for a little repose before I went to sleep for good and all. I thought I might have held out till the peace; but, as that seems at a greater distance than the end of my days, I grow impatient. I would not, however, quit the service of the public, if I did not sincerely think that it would be easy for the Congress, with your counsel, to find a fitter man. God bless you, and crown all your labors with success. With the highest regard and most sincere affection, I am, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Supplies. — Exchange of Prisoners. — Plans of the English Ministry.

Passy, 14 May, 1781.

SIR,

I did myself the honor of writing to your Excellency pretty fully on the 12th of March, to which I beg leave to refer. Colonel Laurens arriving soon after, we renewed the application for more money.

His indefatigable endeavours have brought the good dispositions of this court to a more speedy determination of making an addition, than could well have been expected so soon after the former grant. As he will have an opportunity of acquainting you personally with all the particulars of importance, a circumstantial account of the transaction from me is unnecessary. I would only mention, that, as it is the practice here to consider early in the year the probable expenses of the campaign, and appropriate the revenues to the several necessary services, all subsequent and unexpected demands are extremely inconvenient and disa-

greeable, as they cannot be answered without difficulty, occasion much embarrassment, and are sometimes impracticable. If, therefore, the Congress have not on this occasion obtained all they wished, they will impute it to the right cause, and not suppose a want of good will in our friends, who indeed are such, most firmly and sincerely.

The whole supply for the current year now amounts to twenty millions; but out of this are to be paid your usual drafts for interest money, those in favor of M. de Beaumarchais, and those heretofore drawn on Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens, which I have already either paid or engaged for, with the support of your several ministers, &c. &c.; which I mention, that the Congress may avoid embarrassing my successor with drafts, which perhaps he may not have the means in his hands of honoring. Besides paying the second year's salaries of Messrs. Adams and Dana, Jay and Carmichael, I have furnished Mr. Dana with fifteen hundred pounds sterling credit on Petersburgh, for which place I suppose he is now on his way.

You will receive from Holland advices of the late declaration of that court, with regard to the English refusal of its mediation, and of the assistance requested by the States-General. I hope Mr. Dana will find it well disposed towards us.

I have received no answer yet to my letters relating to the proposed mode of lodging funds here, by supplying the French fleet and army. Having as yet heard nothing of Colonel Palfrey, and it being now more than four months since he sailed, there is great reason to fear he may be lost. If that should unhappily be the case, the Congress cannot too soon appoint another consul, such an officer being really necessary here. Your minister plenipotentiary has hith-

erto had all that sort of business upon his hands; and, as I do not now speak for myself, I may speak more freely. I think he should be freed from the burden of such affairs, from all concerns in making contracts for furnishing supplies, and from all your bill of exchange business, &c. &c., that he may be more at liberty to attend to the duties of his political function.

The prisoners in England are increasing by the late practice of sending our people from New York, and the refusal of the English admiralty to exchange any Americans for Englishmen not taken by American armed vessels. I would mention it for the consideration of Congress, whether it may not be well to set apart five or six hundred English prisoners, and refuse them all exchange in America, but for our countrymen now confined in England.

Agreeably to the vote of Congress, and your Excellency's letter of the 4th of January, I have requested the assistance of this court for obtaining the release of Mr. President Laurens. It does not yet appear that the thing is practicable. What the present situation is of that unfortunate gentleman, may be gathered from the enclosed letters.*

I hope the *Alliance*, with the ship *Marquis de Lafayette* under her convoy, is by this time arrived, as they sailed the 27th of March. I flatter myself, that the supplies of clothing, &c., which they carry, will be found good of the kind, and well bought. I have by several late opportunities sent copies of the government letters taken in the New York packet. Your Excellency will see, that they are written in the perfect persuasion of our submitting speedily, and that

* The reference here is to the letters of Sir Grey Cooper, and Mr. Charles Vernon. See Vol. VIII. pp. 514, 516, 517.

the Commissioners are cautioned not to promise too much, with regard to the future constitutions to be given us, as many changes of the old may be necessary, &c. One cannot read those letters from the American secretary of state, and his under-secretary, Knox, without a variety of reflections on the state we should necessarily be in, if obliged to make the submission they so fondly hope for, but which I trust in God they will never see. Their affairs in the East Indies, by the late accounts, grow worse and worse; and twenty-two ships of the prey they made in the West are wrenched out of their jaws by the squadron of M. de la Motte-Piquet.

I mentioned in a former letter, my purpose of remaining here for some time after I should be superseded. I mean it with the permission of Congress, and on the supposition of no orders being sent me to the contrary; and I hope it will be so understood. With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

New Constitution of Massachusetts. — Maintenance of the Clergy. — Scripture Phrases.

Passy, 15 May, 1781.

Dear Sir,

I received your kind letter of February 1st, by Colonel Johonnot. Your sentiments of the present state of our affairs appear to me very judicious, and I am much obliged by your free communication of them. They are often of use here; for you have a name and character among us, that give weight to your opinions.

It gives me great pleasure to learn, that your new

constitution is at length settled with so great a degree of unanimity and general satisfaction.* It seems to me upon the whole an excellent one; and that if there are some particulars, that one might have wished a little different, they are such as could not in the present state of things have been well obtained otherwise than they are, and, if by experience found inconvenient, will probably be changed hereafter. I would only mention at present one article, that of maintenance for the clergy. It seems to me, that, by the constitution, the Quakers may be obliged to pay the tax for that purpose. But, as the great end in imposing it is professedly the promotion of piety, religion, and morality, and those people have found means of securing that end among themselves without a regular clergy, and their teachers are not allowed to receive money; I should think it not right to tax them, and give the money to the teacher of the parish; but I imagine, that, in the laws to be made for levying parish taxes, this matter may be regulated to their contentment.

I am very sensible of the honor done me by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, in choosing me one of their members. I wish I could be of some utility in promoting the noble design of their institution. Perhaps I may, by sending them from time to time some of the best publications that appear here. I shall begin to make a collection for them.

Your excellent Sermon gave me abundance of pleasure, and is much admired by several of my friends who understand English. I propose to get it translated and printed at Geneva, at the end of a translation of your new constitution. Nothing could be hap-

* Constitution of Massachusetts.

pier than your choice of a text, and your application of it. It was not necessary in New England, where everybody reads the Bible, and is acquainted with Scripture phrases, that you should note the texts from which you took them; but I have observed in England, as well as in France, that verses and expressions taken from the sacred writings, and not known to be such, appear very strange and awkward to some readers; and I shall therefore, in my edition, take the liberty of marking the quoted texts in the margin.

I know not whether a *belly-full* has been given to anybody by the picking of *my bones*, but picked they now are, and I think it time they should be *at rest*. I am taking measures to obtain that rest for them; happy if, before I die, I can find a few days absolutely at my own disposal. I often form pleasing imaginations of the pleasure I should enjoy as a private person among my friends and compatriots in my native Boston. God only knows whether this pleasure is reserved for me. With the greatest and most sincere esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO FRANCIS LEWIS.

Passy, 16 May, 1781.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 1st of January. The bill for four thousand four hundred and forty-four Mexican dollars, which you remitted to Mr. Schweighauser, being refused payment by Mr. Jay, for want of a regular endorsement by Mr. Laurens, in whose favor it was drawn, and which endorsement could not now be obtained, Mr. Schweighauser applied to me, informing me, that he

should not send the things ordered by your Board, unless the bill was paid; and it appearing on the face of the bill, that it was drawn for public service, I concluded to take it up, on which he has purchased the things and shipped them. Colonel Laurens has put on board some other supplies for the army, and I suppose the vessel will now sail directly.

The drafts from Congress upon me for various services, and those on Mr. Jay and Mr. Laurens, all coming upon me for payment, together with the expenses on the ships, &c. &c., have made it impracticable for me to advance more for loading the *Active;* but as we have obtained lately promises of a considerable aid for this year, I shall now try what I can do, as the money comes in, towards supplying what is demanded in the invoice you mention. You will receive, I hope, twenty-eight cannon, and a large quantity of powder and saltpetre, by the ship *Marquis de Lafayette.* I have, by several opportunities, written in answer to your questions relative to the ship *Alliance.* I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Please to present my respects to the Board.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Duties on American Exports.

Passy, 19 May, 1781

SIR,

I have with you no doubt, that America will be easily able to pay off not only the interest, but the principal, of all the debt she may contract in this war. But whether duties upon her exports will be the best

method of doing it, is a question I am not so clear in. England raised indeed a great revenue by duties on tobacco. But it was by virtue of a prohibition of foreign tobaccos, and thereby obliging the internal consumer to pay those duties. If America were to lay a duty of five pence sterling a pound on the exportation of her tobacco, would any European nation buy it? Would not the colonies of Spain and Portugal, and the Ukraine of Russia, furnish it much cheaper? Was not England herself obliged, for such reasons, to drop the duty on tobacco she furnished to France? Would it not cost an immense sum in officers, &c., to guard our long coast against smuggling of tobacco, and running it out to avoid a duty? And would not many even of those officers be corrupted and connive at it? It is possibly an erroneous opinion, but I find myself rather inclined to adopt that modern one, which supposes it best for every country to leave its trade entirely free from all incumbrances. Perhaps no country does this at present. Holland comes the nearest to it; and her commercial wealth seems to have increased in proportion.

Your Excellency has done me the honor of announcing to me your appointment. I hope soon to return the compliment by informing you of my demission. I find the various employments of merchant, banker, judge of admiralty, consul, &c. &c., besides my ministerial function, too multifarious and too heavy for my old shoulders; and have therefore requested Congress that I may be relieved; for in this point I agree even with my enemies, that another may easily be found who can better execute them.

B. Franklin.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 8 June, 1781.

SIR,

I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me on the 4th instant. I do not know whether Mr. Laurens has purchased the clothing in Holland on account of Congress; I only know (and you were likewise informed of it at the same time), that this officer was *to employ for his purchases in France* part of the six millions, which the King has granted to Congress, and that the residue of this sum was intended to be sent to America, with a view of reëstablishing the credit of the United States.

If Mr. Laurens, instead of paying ready money in Holland, has contented himself with giving bills on you, I have no concern in it, and the King can furnish no means for your reimbursement.

As to the moneys arising from the loan opened in Holland, we have no pretensions to regulate the employment of them, as they belong to the United States. You must, therefore, Sir, apply to Congress for the power of disposing of them, in discharge of the drafts drawn on you from all quarters. I have the honor to be, &c. DE VERGENNES.

TO MESSRS. D. WENDORP AND THOMAS HOPE HEYHGER.

Passy, 8 June, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 31st past, relating to your ship, sup-

posed to be retaken from the English by an American privateer, and carried into Morlaix. I apprehend that you have been misinformed, as I do not know of any American privateer at present in these seas. I have the same sentiments with you of the injustice of the English, in their treatment of your nation. They seem at present to have renounced all pretension to any other honor, than that of being the first piratical state in the world. There are three employments, which I wish the law of nations would protect, so that they should never be molested or interrupted by enemies even in time of war; I mean farmers, fishermen, and merchants; because their employments are not only innocent, but for the common subsistence and benefit of the human species in general. As men grow more enlightened, we may hope that this will in time be the case. Till then we must submit, as well as we can, to the evils we cannot remedy. I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Suggests the Appointment of a Secretary of Legation.

At sea, 9 June, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

On the 1st instant, we had a faint breeze, that just served to bring us to sea, where we have been languishing in calms and buffeting against contrary winds, which at one time were so violent, as to oblige us to lie to till yesterday morning, when a favorable change took place, and enabled us to enter the ocean at a convenient distance from Cape Ortegal. As we are parting with the *Engageante*, which has accompanied

us thus far, and returns to Coruña to convoy a part of the French West India trade, I snatch a moment to pay my last respects to your Excellency, and to mention a matter, which has occurred to me since my being on board.

I have frequently reflected upon the mention, which you have made, of retiring from your present important station, and have never varied the opinion, which I took the liberty of giving you once at the Count de Vergennes', namely, that the best arrangement would be, to give your Excellency an active, intelligent Secretary of the Embassy, who might relieve you from the drudgery of office, and that your country should not be deprived of the advantages of your wisdom and influence. The difficulty hitherto has been, to find a person properly qualified. The advantages, which your grandson derives from his knowledge of the language and manners of the people, and his having been so long in your office and with your Excellency, are very great. The prejudices, which have been entertained against him, may be removed by a personal introduction to Congress, especially if it is combined with rendering a popular service. I take the liberty of proposing to your Excellency, therefore, if you can spare Mr. Franklin for the purpose, to commit to his care the second remittance of money, and to hasten his departure with that and such of the public supplies of clothing, as may be ready to accompany it. I am persuaded, that, in public bodies, the want of a personal acquaintance is a great objection to appointing a man to any important office.

The *Engageante's* boat demands my letter. I have written in the greatest haste upon a subject, which I hope you will turn to public utility. I renew my sincerest and tenderest wishes for your health and pros-

perity. I entreat a continuance of the friendship with which you have honored me, and am, with the greatest veneration, &c.

JOHN LAURENS.*

* On the subject of the above letter, Mr. Jay wrote to the President of Congress from Madrid, as follows, April 21st, 1781.

"By the letter from Doctor Franklin, herewith enclosed, and which he was so obliging as to leave open for my perusal, I find he has requested permission to retire, on account of his age, infirmities, &c. How far his health may be impaired, I know not. The letters I have received from him bear no marks of age, and there is an acuteness and sententious brevity in them, which do not indicate an understanding injured by years. I have many reasons to think our country much indebted to him; and I confess it would mortify my pride as an American, if his constituents should be the only people to whom his character is known, that should deny his merit and services the testimony given them by other nations. Justice demands of me to assure you, that his reputation and respectability are acknowledged and have weight here, and that I have received from him all that uniform attention and aid, which was due to the importance of the affairs committed to me.

"The affectionate mention he makes of his only descendant, on whom the support of his name and family will devolve, is extremely amiable, and flows in a delicate manner from that virtuous sensibility, by which nature kindly extends the benefits of parental affection to a period beyond the limits of our lives. This is an affecting subject, and minds susceptible of the finer sensations are insensibly led at least to wish that the feelings of an ancient patriot, going in the evening of a long life early devoted to the public, to enjoy repose in the bosom of philosophic retirement, may be gratified by seeing some little sparks of the affection of his country rest on the only support of his age, and hope of his family. Such are the effusions of my heart on this occasion, and I pour them into yours from a persuasion that they will meet with a hospitable reception from congenial emotions."

In reply to Colonel Laurens's letter, Dr. Franklin said; "I received your very kind letter written at sea, off the coast of Spain. I thank you for the friendly hint contained in it respecting my grandson; I see that what you propose for him might have a good effect; but I have too much occasion for his assistance, and cannot spare him to make the voyage. He must take his chance, and I hope he will in time obtain, as well as merit, the consideration of our government."—*Passy, November 8th*, 1781.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, 11 June, 1781.

SIR,

I have lately done myself the honor of writing largely to your Excellency by divers conveyances, to which I beg leave to refer. This is chiefly to cover the copy of a letter I have just received from the minister, relative to the disposition of the late loans; by which will be seen the situation I am in with respect to my acceptances of the quantities of bills drawn by Congress on Mr. Jay, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Adams, and myself; which I entered into, in the expectation, which both Colonel Laurens and myself entertained, that a part of these loans might be applied to the payment of these bills, but which I am now told cannot be done without an express order from Congress.

I shall endeavour to change the sentiments of the court in this respect, but I am not sure of succeeding. I must therefore request, that a resolution of Congress may immediately be sent, empowering me to apply as much of those loans as shall be necessary for the discharge of all such drafts of Congress, or for the repayment of such sums, as I may in the mean time be obliged to borrow for the discharge of those drafts. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Expenses of Foreign Ministers charged on public Account.

Passy, 11 June, 1781.

SIR,

Mr. Grand has communicated to me a letter from your Excellency to him, relating to certain charges in

your account, on which you seem to desire to have my opinion. As we are all new in these matters, I consulted, when I was making up my account, one of the oldest foreign ministers here, as to the custom in such cases. He informed me, that it was not perfectly uniform with the ministers of all courts, but that in general, where a salary was given for service and expenses, the expenses understood were merely those necessary to the man, such as housekeeping, clothing, and coach; but that the rent of the hotel in which he dwelt, the payment of couriers, the postage of letters, the salary of clerks, the stationery for his bureau, with the feasts and illuminations made on public occasions, were esteemed the expenses of the Prince, or State that appointed him, being for the service or honor of his Prince or nation, and either entirely, or in great part, expenses, that, as a private man, he would have been under no necessity of incurring. These, therefore, were to be charged in his accounts. He remarked, it was true, that the minister's housekeeping as well as his house was usually, and in some sort necessarily more expensive, than those of a private person; but this, he said, was considered in his salary, to avoid trouble in accounts; but that, where the Prince or state had not purchased or built a house for their minister, which was sometimes the case, they always paid his house rent.

I have stated my own accounts according to this information; and I mention them, that, if they seem to you reasonable, we may be uniform in our charges, by your charging in the same manner; or, if objections to any of them occur to you, that you would communicate them to me for the same reason.

Thus you see my opinion, that the articles you mention, of *courtage*, *commission*, and *port de lettres*, are

expenses that ought to be borne, not by you, but by the United States. Yet it seems to me more proper, that you should pay them, and charge them with the other articles above mentioned, than that they should be paid by me, who, not knowing the circumstances, cannot judge (as you can) of the truth and justice of such an account when presented, and who, besides, have no orders to pay more on your account, than your net salary.

With regard to that salary, though your receipts to Fizeau and Grand, shown to me, might be quite sufficient to prove they had paid you the sums therein mentioned, yet, as there are vouchers for them, and which they have a right to retain, I imagine it will be clearest if you draw upon me, agreeably to the order of Congress; and, if this is quarterly, it will be the most convenient to me. With great respect, I have the honor, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

FROM SAMUEL HUNTINGTON, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Communicating Instructions for the Negotiation of Peace.

Philadelphia, 19 June, 1781.

SIR,

You will receive, herewith enclosed, a letter addressed to his most Christian Majesty, with a copy of the same for your information; also a commission constituting yourself, with the four other gentlemen therein named, our ministers for negotiating a peace; also, another commission and duplicate authorizing the same

* See Mr. Adams's answer in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 238.

ministers to accept of the mediation of the Emperor of Germany and Empress of Russia, in one of which, the Emperor is first named, and, in the other, the Empress, to be made use of as circumstances shall render it expedient.*

I have also herewith enclosed instructions for your government, in addition to those formerly given to Mr. Adams for negotiating peace. A letter, in answer to yours of the 12th of March last, will also accompany this. You will please to communicate immediately to Mr. Adams and Mr. Jay the receipt of these important despatches.

Mr. Secretary Thomson desires you would be so good as to send him the machine, with proper directions, to be used for striking copies of letters, as mentioned in yours of the 12th of March. For want of time I must refer you to Mr. Lovell's despatches for American intelligence in general. I have the honor to be, &c. SAMUEL HUNTINGTON,

President of Congress.

TO WILLIAM JACKSON.†

Stopping Payment of Money in Holland.

Passy, 28 June, 1781.

SIR,

Since my acceptance of your bills, I have applied to the ministry for more money to discharge the other engagements I entered into for payment of the Con-

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* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X. pp. 71-76.

† Mr. Jackson was aid-de-camp to General Lincoln, and accompanied Colonel Laurens to France. When Colonel Laurens left Paris, to return to America, he sent Mr. Jackson to Holland, with instructions to superintend the shipment of money and goods on public account in the frigate *South Carolina*, commanded by Commodore Gillon

gress bills drawn on Holland and Spain. I find so much difficulty, and even impossibility of obtaining it at this time, that I am under the absolute necessity of stopping the cash that is in Holland, or of ruining all the credit of the States in Europe, and even in America, by stopping payment.

This is therefore to order, that, in case the said cash has been delivered to you by Messrs. Fizeau and Grand, you would immediately return it into their hands to remain there at my disposal. I am sorry that this operation is necessary, but it must be done, or the consequences will be terrible. I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 30 June, 1781.

I received my dear friend's kind letter of the 15th instant, and immediately communicated your request of a passport to the Count de Vergennes. His answer, which I have but just received, expresses an opinion, that the circumstance of his granting a passport to you, as you mention the purpose of your coming to be the discoursing with me on the subject of peace, might, considering your character, occasion many inconvenient reports and speculations; but that he would make no difficulty of giving it, if you assured me, that you were authorized for such purpose by your ministry, which he does not think at all likely; otherwise he judges it best that I should not encourage your coming.

Thus it seems I cannot have at present the pleasure you were so kind as to propose for me. I can only join with you in earnest wishes for peace, a bless-

ing which I shall hardly live to see. With the greatest esteem and respect, I am ever, dear Sir,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM JACKSON.

Reasons for detaining the Money, which was Part of the Grant obtained by Dr. Franklin.

Passy, 5 July, at 6 in the morning, 1781.

SIR,

I have this instant received your letter of the 2d, urging the delivery of the money. I must be short in my reply, as your express waits.

Colonel Laurens indeed obtained a promise of ten millions to be raised by a loan in Holland. I understood, while he was here, that that loan was in train, and that the million and a half to be sent with you was a part of it. I since learn, that nothing has yet been obtained in Holland, that the success is not yet certain, and that the money in question is a part of the six millions I had obtained before his arrival, upon the strength of which I accepted the bills drawn on his father, and on Mr. Jay, and without which acceptances the Congress's credit in America would have been ruined, and a loss incurred of twenty per cent upon the protests. I cannot obtain more money here at present; and those bills, being accepted, must be paid, as well as those I accepted on your earnest request, for the great unexpected purchase you made in Holland.

Colonel Laurens has carried two millions and a half of that six millions with him, which will serve till the loan in Holland produces a further supply. In the mean time I cannot suffer the credit of our country to be destroyed, if, by detaining this money, it may be

saved. And, if I were to consent to its going, our banker would be obliged to arrest great part of it as belonging to the States, he being in advance for them, which would occasion much disagreeable noise, and very ill consequences to our credit in Europe.

I find, by Mr. Viemerange's account just received, that Mr. Laurens's orders have more than absorbed all the money he did not take with him. I applaud the zeal you have both shown in the affair; but I see, that nobody cares how much I am distressed, provided they can carry their own points. I must, therefore, take what care I can of mine, theirs and mine being equally intended for the service of the public. I am sorry to learn that the vessel is detained for this express. I understood by your last, that she waited for convoy. I heartily wish you a good voyage, and am, with great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

TO WILLIAM JACKSON.

Passy, 5 July, 1781.

SIR,

I received your letter of the 2d instant, by your first express, this morning at six, answered it, and sent him away immediately. I have just now received your second express, of the same date, in which you threaten me with a proceeding, that I apprehend exceedingly imprudent, as it can answer no good end to you, must occasion much scandal, and be thereby very prejudicial to the affairs of the Congress.

But I cannot, therefore, consent to suffer their bills, to the amount of more than a million accepted and expected, to go back protested for want of this money. I have nothing to change in the answer above men-

tioned. You will however follow your own judgment, as I must follow mine; and you will take upon yourself the consequences. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM JACKSON.

Account of the Manner in which the Money referred to in the preceding Letters was obtained.

Passy, 6 July, 1781.

SIR,

I received and answered two of your expresses yesterday morning, and in the evening I received a third letter from you, all dated the 2d instant.*

In this last you tell me, "that I must be sensible I cannot have the disposal of the money, as it was obtained without either my knowledge or concurrence, by Colonel Laurens, appointed special minister for that purpose." I do not desire to diminish the merit of Colonel Laurens. I believe he would have been glad, if it had been in his power, to have procured ten times the sum; and that no application or industry on his part for that purpose would have been wanting. But I cannot let this injurious assertion of yours pass, without expressing my surprise, that you, who were always with that gentleman, should be so totally ignorant of that transaction. The six millions, of which he took with him two and a half, of which one and a half were sent to Holland, and of which more than the remainder is ordered in stores from hence, was a *free gift* from the King's goodness (not a *loan* to be *repaid with interest*), and was obtained by *my application*, long before Colonel Laurens's arrival.

* All Mr. Jackson's letters on this subject are contained in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 221 - 226.

I had also given in a list of the stores to be provided, though on his coming I cheerfully gave up the further prosecution of that business into his hands, as he was better acquainted with the particular wants of the army, than I could be, and it was one of the purposes of his appointment.

Thus no part of the affair was done without my "*knowledge and concurrence,*" except the sending a million and a half. of the specie to Holland. This was indeed a secret to me. I had heard of that sum's being ready there to embark, but I always, till lately, understood it to be a part of the Dutch loan, which I am about to mention, or I should certainly have opposed that operation. What Colonel Laurens really obtained, and a great service I hope it will prove, was a loan upon interest of ten millions, to be borrowed on the credit of this court in Holland. I have not heard, that this loan has yet produced any thing, and therefore I do not know that a single livre exists, or has existed in Europe, of his procuring for the States. On the contrary, he and you have drawn from me considerable sums, as necessary for your expenses, and he left me near forty thousand livres to pay for the *Alliance;* and, moreover, engaged me in a debt in Holland, which I understood might amount to about fifteen thousand pounds sterling, and which you contrived to make fifty thousand pounds.

When I mentioned to him the difficulty I should find to pay the drafts, he said, "You have the remainder of the six millions." He gave me no account of the dispositions he had made, and it is but lately I have learnt, that there is no remainder. To gratify you, and to get that ship out, which could not have stirred without me, I have engaged for the vast sum above mentioned, which I am sure I shall be much distressed to

pay, and therefore have not deserved at your hands the affront you are advised to menace me with.

And, since I find you make it a point of reflection upon me, that I want to apply money to the payment of my engagements for the Congress, which was obtained by Colonel Laurens for other purposes, I must request, that you will upon this better information take occasion to correct that error, if you have communicated it to any other person.

By the letters you showed me, that had passed between Mr. Adams and you, I perceived he had imbibed an opinion, that Colonel Laurens had, as he expressed it, done more for the United States in the short time of his being in Europe, than all the rest of their diplomatic corps put together. I should never have disputed this, because I had rather lend a little credit to a friend, than take any from him, especially when I am persuaded he will make a good use of it; but, when his friends will make such supposititious credit a matter of reproach to me, it is not right to continue silent.

As to the safety of your excellent conveyance you mention, I must own, I have some doubts about it, and I fear I shall hear of the arrival of that ship in England, before she sees America. Be that as it may, I am clear that no use can possibly be made of the money in America for supporting the credit of the States, equal in any degree to the effect it must have for the same purpose, when applied to the payment of their bills here, which must otherwise go back protested. And I am sure it will be exceedingly prejudicial to their credit, if, by the rash proceeding you threaten, this situation of their affairs becomes the subject of public talk and discussion in Europe. I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. I request you would read again, and consider well, my first letter to you on this subject. The reasons therein contained subsist still in their full force.*

* Mr. Jackson afterwards had reason to be entirely satisfied with the course pursued by Dr. Franklin on this occasion. He sailed from Amsterdam with Commodore Gillon, who, after cruising four weeks in the North Sea and near the English Channel, put into Coruña. From that port, Mr. Jackson wrote to Dr. Franklin as follows.

"I am sorry to inform you, that the event has verified your prediction in every particular. Mr. Gillon has violated his contract with Colonel Laurens in every instance. I beg leave to present you my most sincere and cordial thanks, as well for myself as my country, for your disposition of the money, which was to have been embarked on board this vessel, the event having fatally confirmed your opinion of this man. I conceive my country indebted to your prudence for the preservation of her property, as I do myself for my freedom at this instant; for, I am assured, had not your precaution prevented the embarkation, I should at this hour have been a prisoner; I need not say where." — *Coruña, September 26th*, 1781.

It would seem, that there were personal differences between Commodore Gillon, Mr. Jackson, and some of the other passengers. Gillon complained of Mr. Jackson's conduct in letters to Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, from which it is obvious, that the above expressions of discontent on the part of Mr. Jackson are to be received with considerable modification, as dictated more by feeling than by a calm and impartial view of the case. Commodore Gillon said, that he had been detained long on the coast by contrary winds, and came to Coruña for a supply of provisions, as he had not enough remaining, in consequence of this detention, to enable him to cross the Atlantic. There were five hundred and fifty men on board. Three hundred of these were marines, who were called *Volontaires de Luxembourg*, and whom he had engaged, by the King's permission, in France, for the State of South Carolina. They were to serve three years. Dr. Waterhouse, who was a passenger on board the vessel, had a favorable opinion of the Commodore, as appears by a letter he wrote from Coruña to Mr. Adams. He thought the difficulties were chiefly to be ascribed to Mr. Jackson, and one or two other passengers, who took offence without a just cause; and he has since written, in relation to this affair; "I had, and always shall have, a high degree of respect for Commodore Gillon, as an able and honorable man."

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.*

Mistakes respecting American Bills of Exchange and Commerce corrected.

Passy, 6 July, 1781.

It seems to have been insinuated, either through mistake or ill will to the United States,

1. That their merchants have combined to depreciate the bills drawn on France.

2. That their trade with England is as great as before the war.

I have known two instances wherein bills of exchange on England have fallen more than fifteen per cent lower than the present price of bills on France.

The first was in 1739, when, an expedition being projected against Carthagena, the government of England ordered three thousand men to be raised in America, and transports with provisions to be furnished, for the amount of which expense, bills were ordered to be drawn on the treasury at London. This adventitious quantity of bills coming into market, and being more than the common course of the commerce required, occasioned the lowering of their price forty-two and a half per cent below the rate before accustomed.

The like happened a few years after, when, on a prospect of short crops of corn in Europe, orders were received in America to purchase and send over vast quantities, and to draw bills and sell them in the country in order to raise money for the purchase. This sudden addition to the quantity of bills produced a fall

* In a memorandum, Dr. Franklin says; "The following paper was delivered to M. de Rayneval, to be by him communicated to Count de Vergennes, in order to correct some wrong ideas of that minister."

of forty per cent in their price. And this must always happen in some proportion, when the quantity of any article *in commerce* exceeds the present demand.

And when it is considered, that the merchants of America are numerous, and dispersed through thirteen different provinces, at great distance from each other, such a combination will appear as improbable, as that the farmers in France should combine to raise the price of wheat.

With regard to the English commerce, there is none certainly but what is contraband, and there can be no temptations to such contraband, but for particular commodities that are cheaper there than in France. The quantity therefore cannot be great. Such contraband is found difficult to prevent in all countries. It is carried on at this time between France and England. But there are many commodities much cheaper in France, such as wines, silks, oil, modes, &c., which will be of great consumption in America; and, when correspondencies are once settled, and the people there become acquainted with the manufactures of France, the demand for them will increase; these manufactures will of course be improved in goodness and cheapness, and the trade continue to augment accordingly.

It is difficult to change suddenly the whole current of connexions, correspondencies, and confidences, that subsist between merchants, and carry them all into a new channel; but time and a continuance of friendship will make great alterations.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Madrid, 9 July, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Many weeks have elapsed since I have been favored with any letters from you. I have received a letter from Colonel Laurens, dated at sea, and covering the one herewith enclosed for you. A vessel has arrived at Bilboa, in twenty-four days from Salem. I received by her some family letters, which came from Bilboa under cover to a gentleman here. She brought for me a large packet, which was put into the postoffice, and ought to have come to hand a week ago. I have inquired for it, but in vain. This is not an uncommon case, and shows how necessary it is, that Congress should take some other means for conveying intelligence to and from their ministers than the European postoffices. Be pleased to make my compliments to your grandson, and remind him that he is three letters in my debt.

You will also find herewith enclosed a copy of a letter I have received from Silas Talbot, a prisoner at Plymouth, requesting aid. This gentleman gives a true description of himself. He has on various occasions acted like a very brave and enterprising officer, and the journals of Congress contain ample evidence of it. I sincerely lament his situation, and regret that my own does not put it in my power to afford him relief. The far greater part of the money which the public demands require here, I draw from you. The amount of the bills drawn upon me by Congress far exceeds that of the funds prepared for their payment, and the debts already incurred on account of distressed American seamen still remain unpaid. It would not be delicate in me to advance money to Colonel Talbot, and

then request the favor of you to replace it, especially as his situation places him more immediately under your care than mine. All that I can therefore do with propriety is to make you acquainted with his case. He has served his country zealously, and has a right to her care; gratitude as well as policy dictates it.

I fear too little attention has in general been paid to our captive seamen. I often hear of many entering into the enemy's service for want of bread, and for ill treatment not retaliated; even those, who have had the good fortune and address to escape, are frequently obliged, in seeking opportunities to return home, to wander about from place to place, friendless, penniless, ignorant of the language of the strangers through whose land they pass, making known their wants only by the voice of distress, and subsisting on the wretched husks cast to them by the frugal hand of charity. Nor is this all; although their misfortunes, on finding American vessels bound home, ought to recommend them to their brethren, yet it too often happens that masters of American vessels inhumanly refuse (unless paid passage money) to carry home these unfortunate people, though offering to do duty without wages as sailors during the voyage. I am, dear Sir, with sincere esteem and regard, &c.

JOHN JAY.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, 11 July, 1781.

SIR,

The number of Congress bills that have been drawn on the ministers in Spain and Holland, which I am by my acceptances obliged to pay, as well as those drawn upon myself, the extreme importance of sup-

porting the credit of Congress, which would be disgraced in a political, as well as a pecuniary light, through all the courts of Europe, if those bills should go back protested, and the unexpected delays arising with regard to the intended loan in Holland, — all those considerations have compelled me to stop the one million five hundred thousand livres, which were to have been sent by way of Amsterdam. As soon as more money can be furnished to me by this court, I shall take care to replace that sum, and forward with it as great an addition as possible. I am now soliciting supplies of clothing, arms, ammunition, &c., to replace what has been unfortunately lost in the *Marquis de Lafayette;* and hope to succeed.

Captain Jackson, who is truly zealous for the service, has been exceedingly solicitous and earnest with me to induce me to permit the money to go in this ship; but, for the reasons above mentioned, I find it absolutely necessary to retain it for the present, which I doubt not will be approved by Congress. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM ROBERT MORRIS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Efforts to restore the Credit of the United States. — Necessity of foreign Aid.

Philadelphia, 13 July, 1781.

SIR,

The unanimous appointment to the superintendency of our finances, with which Congress have honored me, and my conviction of the necessity that some *one* person should endeavour to introduce method and economy into the administration of affairs, have induced

me, though with reluctance, to accept that office.* Mr. Jay will receive by this conveyance, and forward to you, copies of those resolutions and letters, which may be necessary to explain my appointment and powers.

I wish I could as readily effect, as I most ardently desire, the accomplishment of all proper arrangements. Thoroughly convinced, that no country is truly independent, until, with her own credit and resources, she is able to defend herself and correct her enemies, it shall be my constant endeavour to establish our credit and draw out our resources in such manner, that we may be little burdensome, and essentially useful to our friends.

I am sure I need not mention to *you* the importance of collecting a revenue with ease, and expending it with economy. As little need I detail the time, the authority, the ability, the favorable circumstances, that must combine for these purposes. But I think that I may assert, that the situation of a country, just emerging from dependence and struggling for existence, is peculiarly unfavorable; and I may add, that this country, by relying too much on paper, is in a condition of peculiar disorder and debility. To rescue and restore her is an object equal to my warmest wishes, though probably beyond the stretch of my abilities.

Success will greatly depend on the pecuniary aid we may obtain from abroad; because money is necessary to introduce economy, while, at the same time, economy is necessary to obtain money; besides that a greater plenty of solid circulating medium is required to support those operations, which must give stability

* Mr. Morris was appointed *Superintendent of Finance* on the 20th of February, 1781, but did not engage in the duties of the office till May following.

to our credit, fruitfulness to our revenue, and activity to our operations. Among those things, which, after the experience and example of other ages and nations, I have been induced to adopt, is that of a national bank, the plan of which I enclose. I mean to render this a principal pillar of American credit, so as to obtain the money of individuals for the benefit of the Union, and thereby bind those individuals more strongly to the general cause by the ties of private interest. To the efficacy of this plan, as well as to the establishment of a mint, which would also be of use, a considerable sum of money is necessary, and, indeed, it is indispensably so for many other purposes.

Be not alarmed, Sir, from what I have said, with the apprehension that I am about to direct solicitations to the court of Versailles; which, after the repeated favors they have conferred, must be peculiarly disagreeable. On the contrary, as I am convinced, that the moneys of France will all be usefully employed in the vigorous prosecution of the war by her own fleets and armies, I lament every sum which is diverted from them. Our necessities have indeed called for her aid, and perhaps they may continue to do so. Those calls have hitherto been favorably attended to, and the pressure of our necessities has been generously alleviated; nor do I at all doubt, that future exigencies will excite the same dispositions in our favor, and that those dispositions will be followed with correspondent effects. But I again repeat my wish, at once to render America independent of, and useful to, her friends.

With these views, I have directed Mr. Jay to ask a considerable sum from the court of Madrid, to be advanced us at the Havana, and brought thence by us, if it cannot conveniently be landed here from Span-

ish men-of-war.* I say *a considerable sum*, because, as I have declared to him, I do not wish to labor under the weight of obligation, without deriving from it any real benefit; and because I consider the advance of small sums rather as a temporary palliation than a radical remedy. Our disorders are such, that the former can be of no use, and it would be better to desist in a desultory defence, than to put on the delusive appearances of a vigor we do not feel; for this lulls the people into a dangerous security, and softens those hopes of the enemy, which give duration and extent to the war. It is the disorder of our finances, which has prevented us from a powerful coöperation with our allies, and which has enabled the enemy to linger on our coasts with the dregs of a force once formidable; and it is from this cause, that they have been permitted to extend the theatre, and multiply the victims, of their ambition.

America alone will not derive benefit from the advances which Spain may make to her. All the associates in the war will feel the *consequential* advantages. The expense of the American war now hangs a heavy weight about the neck of Britain, and enfeebles her on that element, which she called her own. An increase of that expense, or the loss of her posts here, must necessarily follow from additional efforts on our part; and either of these must be a consequential benefit to those who are opposed to her. France will derive a small *immediate* benefit from it, as she will thereby get more money here for her bills of exchange, than she can at present procure. But it is not so much from any advantage, which may be expected to

* See a letter from Mr. Morris, in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. VII. p. 421.

that kingdom, or from any motives of *interest*, as from the generosity and magnanimity of the Prince, that we hope for support. I will not doubt a moment, that, at your instance, his Majesty will make pressing representations in support of Mr. Jay's application, and I hope that the authority of so great a sovereign, and the arguments of his able ministry, will shed auspicious influence on our negotiations at Madrid.

From the best returns I have been able to collect, and which are in some measure imperfect, from the confusions and disasters of the southern States, I find that there are about seven million two hundred thousand dollars due on certificates, which bear an interest of six per cent, payable in France, at the rate of five livres for every dollar. Many causes have conspired to depreciate the certificates, notwithstanding the interest is so well secured, and has been punctually paid. This depreciation is so great, that they are daily offered for sale at a very considerable discount, which is attended with two pernicious consequences; one, that a considerable expense is unnecessarily incurred, and the other, that the public credit is unnecessarily impaired. If I had the means, therefore, I would remove this evil by purchasing in the certificates; and, to procure the means, I am to pray that you would state this matter fully to the ministers of his Most Christian Majesty. The interest being guarantied by the court of France, they now pay for this purpose, two million one hundred and sixty thousand livres annually; a sum which, in less than ten years, would pay a debt of fifteen millions of livres at five per cent interest. With fifteen millions of livres, however, prudently managed, the whole of these certificates might be paid. I am sure it is unnecessary to dwell on the advantages, which would result from making such

a loan for this purpose; and, I trust, that if this matter is stated to M. Necker, that enlightened minister will coöperate in the plan, to the utmost of his ability. I again repeat, that I do not wish to lay any burdens on France; but this proposal is calculated to relieve us both; and, in any case, the expense to France will be the same. Should it be adopted, I must request the earliest notice, that my operations may commence; and, in any case, I hope that secrecy will be observed, for the most evident reasons.

I am sorry to inform you, that we have as yet no satisfactory news of the ship *Lafayette;* but, on the contrary, her long delay occasions the most alarming apprehensions. If, as but too probable, that ship is lost, you will more easily conceive, than I can describe, what will be the situation of our troops next winter.

I could wish, as soon as possible, to have a state of all the public accounts transmitted, to the end that moneys due to the United States may be paid, and measures taken to provide for such sums as they stand indebted in to others. Your Excellency will, I dare say, send them as soon as may be convenient; and I hope the public affairs will hereafter be conducted in such a manner, as to give you much less of that unnecessary trouble, which you have hitherto experienced, and which could not but have harassed you exceedingly, and, perhaps, taken up time, which would otherwise have been devoted to more important objects.

I shall, probably, have frequent occasion to address you, and shall always be happy to hear from you; but the mischiefs, which arise from having letters intercepted, are great and alarming. I have, therefore, enclosed you a cipher, and, in the duplicate of my letters, I shall enclose another. If both arrive, you will use one, and, in case of your absence, leave the

other with such person as may supply your place. Let me know, however, which cipher you use.

The bearer of this letter, Major Franks, formerly an aid-de-camp to General Arnold, and honorably acquitted of all connexion with him after a full and impartial inquiry, will be able to give you our public news more particularly than I could relate them. He sails hence for Cadiz, and on his arrival will proceed to Madrid, where, having delivered my letters to Mr. Jay, he will take his orders for you. He will then wait your orders, and, I hope, will soon after meet a safe opportunity of coming to America. With the most perfect esteem and regard, I have the honor to be, &c. ROBERT MORRIS.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Passy, 26 July, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your very friendly letter of the 6th of June past, announcing your appointment to the superintendence of our finances. This gave me great pleasure, as, from your intelligence, integrity, and abilities, there is reason to hope every advantage, that the public can possibly receive from such an office. You are wise in estimating beforehand, as the principal advantage you can expect, the consciousness of having done service to your country; for the business you have undertaken is of so complex a nature, and must engross so much of your time and attention, as necessarily to injure your private interests; and the public is often niggardly, even of its thanks, while you are sure of being censured by malevolent critics and bug-writers, who will abuse you while you are serving

them, and wound your character in nameless pamphlets; thereby resembling those little dirty insects, that attack us only in the dark, disturb our repose, molesting and wounding us, while our sweat and blood are contributing to their subsistence. Every assistance that my situation here, as long as it continues, may enable me to afford you, shall certainly be given; for, besides my affection for the glorious cause we are both engaged in, I value myself upon your friendship, and shall be happy if mine can be made of any use to you.

With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Disposition of the Moneys raised in France.— American Banker in Paris.

Passy, 26 July, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received the letter you honored me with, of the 8th of June past,* acquainting me, that as superintendent of finance, you have named Messrs. Conteulx & Co., at Paris, to receive from his Majesty's ministers the money granted to Congress, that they may be enabled to honor your bills whenever they appear; and you intimate a desire to be informed of the responsibility of that house.

With regard to the six millions given by the King in aid of our operations for the present campaign, before the arrival of Mr. Laurens, two millions five hundred thousand of it went in the same ship with him, in

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* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. XI. p. 370.

cash; stores equivalent to two millions two hundred thousand more of it were ordered by him, and are shipped; one million five hundred thousand were sent to Holland, to go in the ship commanded by Commodore Gillon. Add to this, that Captain Jackson, by his orders, purchased clothing and stores in Holland, to the value of about fifty thousand pounds sterling, for which he has drawn bills on me, which bills I accepted, and also agreed to pay those drawn on Messrs. Laurens, Jay, and Adams; expecting aid from a projected loan of ten millions of livres for our use in Holland. But, this loan meeting with unforeseen difficulties, and its success uncertain, I have found myself obliged to stop the money in Holland, in order to be able to save the honor of the Congress drafts, and to comply with my engagements.

By these means you have really at present no funds here to draw upon. I hope, however, that Messrs. Couteulx & Co. will be enabled to honor your drafts; but I trust in your prudence, that you will draw no more till you have advice of funds provided. And, as the laying out so much money in Holland instead of France is disapproved here, and the payment will, therefore, not be provided for, I must earnestly request your aid in remitting that sum to me before December next, when my acceptances will become due, otherwise I shall be ruined with the American credit in Europe.

With regard to the wealth and credit of the house of Le Couteulx & Co., I have never heard it in question. But as Mr. Ferdinand Grand, banker at Paris, and his broker, Sir George Grand, banker in Holland, have been our zealous and firm friends ever since our arrival in France, have aided us greatly by their personal interest and solicitations, and have often been six

or seven hundred thousand livres in advance for us, and are houses of unquestionable solidity, I cannot but be concerned at any step for taking our business out of their hands, and wish your future bills may be drawn on Ferdinand Grand; for I think it concerns our public reputation to preserve the character of gratitude, as well as that of honesty and justice. The commission hitherto charged to us by Mr. Grand for receiving and paying our money is a half per cent, which, considering the trouble given by the vast number of small drafts for interest of the loans, appears to me a moderate consideration. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 6 August, 1781.

SIR,

I some time since gave orders, as you desired, to Mr. Grand, to furnish you with a credit in Holland for the remainder of your salary to November next. But I am now told, that, your account having been mixed with Mr. Dana's, he finds it difficult to know the sum due to you. Be pleased therefore to state your account for two years, giving credit for the sums you have received, that an order may be made for the balance. Upon this occasion, it is right to acquaint you, that I do not think we can depend on receiving any more money here, applicable to the support of the Congress ministers.

What aids are hereafter granted, will probably be transmitted by the government directly to America. It will, therefore, be proper to inform Congress, that care

may be taken to furnish their servants by remittances from thence. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Expects little Aid from Holland.

Passy, 6 August, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received several letters from you lately, enclosing others for the President of Congress, and for Spain, all of which are sealed and forwarded, except the last for the President, contained in yours of the 26th past, which shall go by the first opportunity. The reading of those letters gave me much information, and therefore pleasure; though, since the fixing of Mr. Adams there, I do not attend so much to the affairs of your country as before, expecting indeed but little from it to our advantage; for, though it was formerly in the same situation with us, and was glad of assistance from other nations, it does not seem to *feel* for us, or to have the least inclination to help us; it appears to want magnanimity.

Some writer, I forget who, says, that Holland is no longer *a nation*, but *a great shop;* and I begin to think it has no other principles or sentiments but those of a shopkeeper. You can judge of it better than I, and I shall be happy to find myself mistaken. You will oblige me, however, by continuing the history either directly to me, or in your letters to Congress; but, when you enclose a sealed letter in another to me, please to observe to place the second seal on one side, and not directly over the first; because the heat of the second is apt to deface the impression of the

first, and to attach the paper to it, so as to endanger tearing the enclosed in opening the cover. With best wishes for your health and prosperity, I am ever, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I pity the writer of the enclosed, though I have no other acquaintance with him, than having seen him once at Hanover, where he then seemed to live genteelly and in good credit. I cannot conceive what should reduce him to such a situation, as to engage himself for a soldier. If you can procure him any friends among the philosophers of your country, capable of relieving him, I wish you could do it. If not, and he must go to the Indies, please to give him three or four guineas for me, to buy a few necessaries for his voyage.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 10 August, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Enclosed I send you a late paper received from Rhode Island. You will see in it the advantages our troops have gained in South Carolina. Late advices directly from Philadelphia say, that the enemy have now nothing left in Georgia, but Savannah; in South Carolina, but Charleston; nor in North Carolina, but Wilmington. They are, however, in force in Virginia, where M. de Lafayette has not sufficient strength to oppose them, till the arrival of the reinforcements, which were on their march to join him from Maryland and Pennsylvania.

In looking over my last to you, I apprehend I may have expressed myself perhaps a little too hardly of your country; I foresee you will tell me, that we have

many friends there; I once thought so too; but I was a little out of humor when I wrote, on understanding that no loan could be obtained there for our use, though the credit of this kingdom was offered to be engaged for assuring the payment, and so much is lent freely to our enemies. You can best tell the reason; it will be well not to let my letter be seen. I am ever, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO WILLIAM CARMICHAEL.

Congress refuse to accept Dr. Franklin's Resignation.

Passy, 24 August, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

On looking over your letters, I am ashamed to find myself so much and so long in your debt. I thank you for making me acquainted with M. Sonnerat. He appears a very amiable man, and is full of intelligence and information.

We are all much obliged to Count de Montmorin* for his friendly assistance in our affairs. Please to present him my thankful acknowledgments. I thank you also for my being made known to M. Giusti; I saw him often, and had much satisfaction and pleasure in his conversation.

The Congress have done me the honor to refuse accepting my resignation, and insist on my continuing in their service till the peace. I must therefore buckle again to business, and thank God that my health and spirits are of late improved. I fancy it may have been a double mortification to those enemies you have mentioned to me, that I should ask as a favor what they

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* French Ambassador in Spain.

hoped to vex me by taking from me; and that I should nevertheless be continued. But this sort of considerations should never influence our conduct. We ought always to do what appears best to be done, without much regarding what others may think of it. I call this continuance an honor, and I really esteem it to be a greater than my first appointment, when I consider that all the interest of my enemies, united with my own request, were not sufficient to prevent it.*

I have not yet received the works of your Economical Society, or those of its founder. I suppose you have not met with an opportunity of sending them. The letter you propose sending to our Philosophical Society will be very acceptable to them. I shall be glad to peruse the copy you propose passing through my hands. Yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* On this subject Dr. Franklin said, in writing to another friend; "Your comparison of the *keystone of an arch* is very pretty, tending to make me content with my situation. But I suppose you have heard our story of the *harrow*; if not, here it is. A farmer, in our country, sent two of his servants to borrow one of a neighbour, ordering them to bring it between them on their shoulders. When they came to look at it, one of them, who had much wit and cunning, said; 'What could our master mean by sending only two men to bring this harrow? No two men upon earth are strong enough to carry it.' 'Poh!' said the other, who was vain of his strength, 'what do you talk of two men? One man may carry it. Help it upon my shoulders, and see.' As he proceeded with it, the wag kept exclaiming, 'Zounds, how strong you are! I could not have thought it. Why, you are a Samson! There is not such another man in America. What amazing strength God has given you! But you will kill yourself! Pray put it down and rest a little, or let me bear a part of the weight.' 'No, no,' said he, being more encouraged by the compliments, than oppressed by the burden; 'you shall see I can carry it quite home.' And so he did. In this particular I am afraid my part of the imitation will fall short of the original."

TO WILLIAM NIXON.*

Means of doing much Good with little Money.

Passy, 5 September, 1781.

REVEREND SIR,

I duly received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 25th past, together with the valuable little book, of which you are the author. There can be no doubt, but that a gentleman of your learning and abilities might make a very useful member of society in our new country, and meet with encouragement there, either as an instructor in one of our Universities, or as a clergyman of the Church of Ireland. But I am not empowered to engage any person to go over thither, and my abilities to assist the distressed are very limited. I suppose you will soon be set at liberty in England by the cartel for the exchange of prisoners. In the mean time, if five *louis-d'ors* may be of present service to you, please to draw on me for that sum, and your bill shall be paid on sight. Some time or other you may have an opportunity of assisting with an equal sum a stranger who has equal need of it. Do so. By that means you will discharge any obligation you may suppose yourself under to me. Enjoin him to do the same on occasion. By pursuing such a practice, much good may be done with little money. Let kind offices go round. Mankind are all of a family. I have the honor to be, Reverend Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

* An English clergyman, prisoner on parole, at Valognes.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Concerning the Payment of Bills drawn by Congress on their Ministers in Europe.

Passy, 12 September, 1781

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letters of July 13th, 14th, 19th, and 21st,* all at once, by way of L'Orient. The originals of those you mention to have sent by Major Franks are not yet come to hand, nor have I heard of his arrival in Spain. Your letters of June 6th and 8th, were remarkably lucky in getting to hand. I think I have received seven of the copies you had the precaution to send of them. I enclose copies of my answers.

I have now the pleasure to acquaint you, that I have obtained a promise of the sum I wanted, to pay the bills I had accepted for the purchases made in Holland; so that your supplying me with remittances for that purpose, which I requested, is now unnecessary, and I shall finish the year with honor. But it is as much as I can do, with the aid of the sum I stopped in Holland; the drafts on Mr. Jay and on Mr. Adams much exceeding what I had been made to expect.

I had been informed, that the Congress had promised to draw no more bills on Europe, after the month of March last, till they should know they had funds here; but I learn from Mr. Adams, that some bills have been lately presented to him, drawn June 22d, on Mr. Laurens, who is in the Tower, which makes the proceeding seem extraordinary. Mr. Adams cannot pay

* See the letters here referred to in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. XI. pp. 370, 377, 383, 395, 396,

these bills, and I cannot engage for them; for I see by the minutes of Congress you have sent me, that, though they have stopped issuing bills drawn on the ministers at Madrid and the Hague, until they shall be assured that funds are provided for paying them, they have left open to be sold those drawn on their minister at Versailles, funds or no funds; which, in the situation you will see I am in by the letters of the Count de Vergennes, terrifies me; for I have promised not to accept any drafts made on me by order of Congress, if such should be after the time above mentioned, unless I have funds in my hands, or in view, to pay them. After its being declared to me, that such bills could not be provided for, and my promise not to engage for them, it will be impossible to ask for the money, if I should accept them; and I believe those bills of Mr. Ross must go back protested.

The projected loan in Holland has of late some appearances of success. I am indeed told it is agreed to by the States; but I do not yet think it so certain, as to venture, or advise the venturing, to act in expectation of it. The instant it is assured, I will send you advice of it by every opportunity, and will, from time to time, send parts of it in cash by such ships of war as can conveniently take it.

I cannot write to you fully by this opportunity. I will not, however, delay acquainting you, that, having the fullest confidence in your assurances of enabling me to pay them, I shall cheerfully accept your bills for four hundred thousand livres. Captain Gillon has sailed from Holland, without taking under his convoy the two vessels, that were freighted to carry the goods purchased by Captain Jackson in Holland. There has been terrible management there; and, from the confusion in the ship, before and when she sailed, it is a question if she ever arrives in America.

They are hard at work here, in providing the supplies to replace those lost in the *Marquis de Lafayette.* With best wishes of success to you in your new employment, and assurances of every aid I can afford you, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Interview with Count de Vergennes. — Appointed One of the Commissioners for negotiating Peace.

Passy, 13 September, 1781.

SIR,

I duly received the two letters your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me, both dated the 19th of June, together with the letter addressed to the King and the three Commissioners, with the instructions relative to the negotiations for peace. I immediately went to Versailles and presented the letter, which was graciously received. I communicated also to Count de Vergennes a copy of your instructions after having deciphered them. He read them while I was with him, and expressed his satisfaction with the unreserved confidence placed in his court by the Congress, assuring me, that they never would have cause to regret it, for that the King had the honor of the United States at heart, as well as their welfare and independence. Indeed, this has already been manifested in the negotiations relative to the plenipotentiaries; and I have had so much experience of his Majesty's goodness to us, in the aids afforded us from time to time, and of the sincerity of this upright and able minister, who never promised me any thing which he did not punctually perform, that I cannot but think the confidence well and judiciously placed, and that it will have happy effects.

I have communicated to Mr. Adams and to Mr. Jay the purport of your despatches. Mr. Adams already had received the same; by the first safe conveyance, I shall acquaint the Congress with the steps, that have been taken in the negotiation. At present, I would only say, that the settling of preliminaries meets with difficulty, and will probably take much time, partly from the remoteness of the mediators; so that any relaxation of our warlike preparations, in expectation of a speedy peace, will be imprudent, as it may be pernicious.

I am extremely sensible of the honor done me by the Congress in this new appointment. I beg they would accept my thankful acknowledgments; and, since they judge I may be serviceable, though I had requested leave to retire, I submit dutifully to their determination, and shall do my utmost to merit in some degree the favorable opinion they appear to have of me. I am the more encouraged in this resolution, as within the last three months I find my health and strength considerably reëstablished.

I wish, however, that a consul-general may soon be appointed for this kingdom; it would ease me of abundance of troublesome business, to which I am not equal, and which interferes with my own important functions.

The King having graciously complied with my request, of replacing the supplies lost in the *Marquis de Lafayette*, many hands are employed in providing them, who work hard to have them ready and shipped, so that they may arrive before winter. With the highest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

P. S. The copying machine for Mr. Secretary Thomson is in hand, and will soon be finished and sent to him.

TO DANIEL OF ST. THOMAS JENIFER.*

Passy, 13 September, 1781.

SIR,

I received the very obliging letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 20th of June last. It gave me great satisfaction to find, by the unanimous choice you mention, that my services had not been unacceptable to Congress; and to hear also that they were favorably disposed towards my grandson, Temple Franklin. It was my desire to quit public business, fearing it might suffer in my hands through the infirmities incident to my time of life. But, as they are pleased to think I may still be useful, I submit to their judgment, and shall do my best.

I immediately forwarded the letter you enclosed for Mr. Lowndes; and if in any thing else I can do you service or pleasure here, please to command me freely. I have the honor to be, with great regard, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO RICHARD BACHE.

Loss of Dr. Franklin's Papers. — Galloway.

Passy, 13 September, 1781.

DEAR SON,

I received yours of June 20th. It gave me great pleasure, as it informed me of the welfare of yourself and the dear family.

I have read Mr. Wharton's pamphlet. The facts, as far as I know them, are as he states them. Justice is, I think, on the side of those who contracted for the

* Member of Congress from Maryland.

lands.* But moral and political rights sometimes differ, and sometimes are both subdued by might. I received, and thank you for, several copies of the Indian *Spelling Book.* I received also the German and English newspapers.

Among my papers in the trunk, which I unhappily left in the care of Mr. Galloway, were eight or ten quire or two-quire books, of rough drafts of my letters, containing all my correspondence, when in England, for near twenty years. I shall be very sorry, if they too are lost. Do not you think it possible, by going up into that country, and inquiring a little among the neighbours, you might possibly hear of, and recover some of them. I should not have left them in his hands, if he had not deceived me, by saying, that, though he was before otherwise inclined, yet that, since the King had declared us out of his protection, and the Parliament by an act had made our properties plunder, he would go as far in the defence of his country as any man; and accordingly he had lately with pleasure given colors to a regiment of militia, and an entertainment to four hundred of them before his house. I thought he was become a staunch friend to the glorious cause. I was mistaken. As he was a friend of my son's, to whom in my will I had left all my books and papers, I made him one of my executors, and put the trunk of papers into his hands, imagining them safer in his house (which was out of the way of any probable march of the enemies' troops) than in my own. It was very unlucky.

My love to Sally and the children. I shall soon write to all my friends. At present I am pinched in time, and can only add, that I am ever your affectionate father, B. FRANKLIN.

* The Indiana Grant.

TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

Friends and Enemies.

Passy, 13 September, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your kind letter of July 17th, with its duplicate, enclosing those for Messrs. Brandlight and Sons, which I have forwarded. I am sorry for the loss of the *Squibs*. Every thing of yours gives me pleasure.

As to the friends and enemies you just mention, I have hitherto, thanks to God, had plenty of the former kind; they have been my treasure; and it has perhaps been of no disadvantage to me, that I have had a few of the latter. They serve to put us upon correcting the faults we have, and avoiding those we are in danger of having. They counteract the mischief flattery might do us, and their malicious attacks make our friends more zealous in serving us and promoting our interest. At present, I do not know of more than two such enemies that I enjoy, viz. —— and ——. I deserved the enmity of the latter, because I might have avoided it by paying him a compliment, which I neglected. That of the former I owe to the people of France, who happened to respect me too much and him too little; which I could bear, and he could not. They are unhappy, that they cannot make everybody hate me as much as they do; and I should be so, if my friends did not love me much more than those gentlemen can possibly love one another.

Enough of this subject. Let me know, if you are in possession of my gimcrack instruments, and if you have made any new experiments. I lent, many years ago, a large glass globe, mounted, to Mr. Coombe, and

an electric battery of bottles, which I remember; perhaps there were some other things. He may have had them so long as to think them his own. Pray ask him for them, and keep them for me, together with the rest.

You have a new crop of prose writers. I see in your papers many of their fictitious names, but nobody tells me the real. You will oblige me by a little of your literary history. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Commission for negotiating Peace.

Amsterdam, 4 October, 1781.

SIR,

Since the 25th of August, when I had the honor to write to you, this is the first time that I have taken a pen in hand to write to anybody, having been confined, and reduced too low to do any kind of business, by a nervous fever.

The new commission for peace has been a great consolation to me, because it removed from the public all danger of suffering any inconvenience, at a time when, for many days together, there were many chances to one that I should have nothing more to do with commissions of any sort. It is still a great satisfaction to me, because I think it a measure essentially right, both as it is a greater demonstration of respect to the powers, whose ministers may assemble to make peace, and as it is better calculated to give satisfaction to the people of America, as the commissioners are chosen from the most considerable places in that country.

It is probable, that the French court is already informed of the alteration; nevertheless, I should think it proper, that it should be officially notified to the Count de Vergennes; and, if you are of the same opinion, as you are near, I should be obliged to you, if you would communicate to his Excellency an authentic copy of the new commission.

I should think, too, that it would be proper to give some intimation of it to the public in the *Gazette* or *Mercure de France*, the two papers which are published with the consent of the court; and, if you are of the same opinion, upon consulting the Count de Vergennes, I should be glad to see it done.

Have you any information concerning Mr. Jefferson, whether he has accepted the trust; whether he has embarked, or proposes soon to embark, &c. I saw a paragraph in a Maryland paper, which expressed an apprehension, that he was taken prisoner by a party of horse in Virginia.*

I feel a strong curiosity to know the answer of the British court to the articles to serve as a basis. I should be much obliged to your Excellency for a copy of it, if to be procured, and for your opinion, whether there will be a congress or not. I have the honor to be, with the greatest respect, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 12 October, 1781.

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me the 4th instant. I have never

* The commissioners were John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Henry Laurens, and Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Jefferson did not accept the appointment.

known a peace made, even the most advantageous, that was not censured as inadequate, and the makers condemned as injudicious or corrupt. "BLESSED *are the peace-makers*" is, I suppose, to be understood in the other world; for in this they are frequently *cursed*. Being as yet rather too much attached to this world, I had therefore no ambition to be concerned in fabricating this peace, and know not how I came to be put into the commission. I esteem it, however, as an honor to be joined with you in so important a business; and, if the execution of it shall happen in my time, which I hardly expect, I shall endeavour to assist in discharging the duty according to the best of my judgment.

Immediately on the receipt of the commission of instructions, I communicated them, as directed, to this court. The steps that have been taken in the mediation were verbally communicated to me, but as yet I have had no copies given me of the papers. I asked, if it was not proper to communicate to the ministers of the mediating powers the commission of Congress, empowering us to accept their mediation; and was advised to postpone it a little. I will endeavour, on Tuesday next, to obtain for you a copy of the answer of the British court, which you desire, and will consult on the propriety of mentioning our commission in the public papers.

I have heard nothing of Mr. Jefferson. I imagine the story of his being taken prisoner is not true. From his original unwillingness to leave America, when I was sent hither, I think his coming doubtful, unless he had been made acquainted with and consented to the appointment.

I hope your health is fully established. I doubt not but you have the advice of skilful physicians, otherwise I should presume to offer mine, which would be,

though you find yourself well, to take a few doses of bark, by way of fortifying your constitution, and preventing a return of your fever. With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO EDMUND BURKE.

Relative to General Burgoyne and Mr. Laurens.

Passy, 15 October, 1781.

SIR,

I received but a few days since your very friendly letter of August last, on the subject of General Burgoyne.

Since the foolish part of mankind will make wars from time to time with each other, not having sense enough otherwise to settle their differences, it certainly becomes the wiser part, who cannot prevent those wars, to alleviate as much as possible the calamities attending them. Mr. Burke always stood high in my esteem; but his affectionate concern for his friend renders him still more amiable, and makes the honor he does me of admitting me of the number still more precious.

I do not think the Congress have any wish to persecute General Burgoyne. I never heard, till I received your letter, that they had recalled him; if they have made such a resolution, it must be, I suppose, a conditional one, to take place in case their offer of exchanging him for Mr. Laurens should not be accepted; a resolution intended merely to enforce that offer.

I have just received an authentic copy of the resolve containing that offer; and authorizing me to make it. As I have no communication with your ministers, I

send it enclosed to you.* If you can find any means of negotiating this business, I am sure the restoring another worthy man to his family and friends will be an addition to your pleasure. With great and invariable respect and affection, I am, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Mr. Livingston appointed Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

Philadelphia, 24 October, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

Three days since, I did myself the honor to write to you, informing you of my appointment to the Secretaryship of Foreign Affairs;† and preparing you for the happy event which has taken place. Enclosed you have the capitulation of Yorktown and Gloucester, by which a British army of five thousand six hundred men was surrendered to the allied arms of France and America; and no inconsiderable fleet, with eight hundred seamen, to the navy of His Most Christian Majesty.

Since my last, which was written the day after I entered upon office, I have seen yours of the 14th of May.

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* "*In Congress, June 13th*, 1781; Resolved, that the minister plenipotentiary from these United States at the court of Versailles be authorized and empowered to offer Lieutenaat-General Burgoyne in exchange for the Honorable Henry Laurens."

† In that letter Mr. Livingston wrote; "Congress having lately thought it advisable to alter the arrangement of their great executive departments, and to dissolve the Boards and Committees under whose direction they formerly were, I am to inform you, that they have done me the honor to appoint me their Secretary of Foreign Affairs; in which capacity they have made it my duty, as it will always be my inclination, to maintain an intimate and regular correspondence with you. I have this day taken the oaths of office."

There are many things in it which deserve the attention I mean to pay it, when the first hurry of the intelligence I communicate occasions is over. But, Sir, there is a part which I cannot delay to take notice of, because I feel myself interested in opposing the resolution that you seem to have formed of quitting the station, which, for the honor of the United States, you now hold. I shall be impatient till I hear, that you comply with the wishes of Congress on this subject, as communicated long since. Though the new powers with which you are invested impose additional burdens upon you, yet, as they at once contain the amplest testimonials of the approbation of Congress, and directly lead to the completion of the great cause in which you so early engaged, I cannot but flatter myself that you will take it upon you. I sent with my first letter to you one to the Count de Vergennes, informing him of my appointment. You will do me the honor to present it. I am, Sir, &c.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO THOMAS M'KEAN, PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

American Prisoners in England. — Proposed Mediation not agreed to by the British Cabinet. — Purchases of Goods in Holland.

Passy, 5 November, 1781.

SIR,

Herewith you will receive a copy of my last; since which I have been honored with two letters from the late President, the one dated March 2d, relating to Captain Jones's cross of merit, which I have communicated as directed; the other, dated July 5th, respecting the release and exchange of Mr. Laurens.

Having no direct communication with the British ministers, and Mr. Burke appearing, by a letter to me, warmly interested in favor of his friend, General Burgoyne, to prevent his being recalled, I have requested and empowered him to negotiate that exchange, and I soon expect his answer. The late practice of sending to England prisoners taken in America has greatly augmented the number of those unfortunate men, and proportionally increased the expense of relieving them. The subscriptions for that purpose in England have ceased. The allowance I have made to them of sixpence each per week during the summer, though small, amounts to a considerable sum; and, during the winter, I shall be obliged to double, if not treble it. The Admiralty there will not accept any English in exchange, but such as have been taken by Americans, and absolutely refuse to allow any of the paroles given to our privateers by English prisoners discharged at sea, except in one instance, that of fifty-three men taken in the *Snake* sloop, by the *Pilgrim* and *Rambler*, which was a case attended, as they say, with some particular circumstances. I know not what the circumstances were, but shall be glad to see the fifty-three of our people, whom they promised to send me by the first cartel. I have above five hundred other paroles solemnly given in writing, by which the Englishmen promised, either to send our people in exchange, or to surrender themselves to me in France, not one of which has been regarded, so little faith and honor remain in that corrupted nation. Our privateers, when in the European seas, will rarely bring in their prisoners when they can get rid of them at sea. Some of our poor brave countrymen have been in that cruel captivity now near four years. I hope the Congress will take this matter into immediate consideration, and find some

means for their deliverance, and to prevent the sending more from America. By my last accounts, the number now in the several prisons amounts to upwards of eight hundred.

I request also some direction from Congress (having never received any) respecting the allowance to be made to them while they remain there. They complain, that the food given them is insufficient. Their petition to the English government, to have an equal allowance with the French and Spanish prisoners, has been rejected, which makes the small pecuniary assistance I can send them more necessary. If a certain number of English prisoners could be set apart in America, treated exactly in the same manner, and their exchange refused till it should be agreed to set these at liberty in Europe, one might hope to succeed in procuring the discharge of our people. Those, who escape and pass through France to get home, put me also to a great expense for their land journeys, which could be prevented if they could be exchanged, as they would be landed here in ports.

The ambassador of Venice told me, that he was charged by the Senate to express to me their grateful sense of the friendly behaviour of Captain Barry, commander of the *Alliance*, in rescuing one of the ships of their State from an English privateer, and setting her at liberty; and he requested me to communicate this acknowledgment to Congress. There is a complaint from Holland against Captain Jones, for having taken the brigantine *Berkenbosch* and sending her to America, and I have been desired to lay before Congress the enclosed depositions relating to that capture, and to request their attention to it.

The ambassador of Portugal also frequently asks me, if I have received any answer to their complaint, long

since sent over. I wish it was in my power to give one of some kind or other. But none has yet come to my hands. I need not mention the importance of attending to the smallest complaints between nations, the neglect of them having sometimes very serious consequences.

The mediation proposed is not agreed to by England, who refuses to treat with our United States but as a Sovereign with subjects; and I apprehend, that a change in that resolution is only to be expected from time, the growing insupportable expense of the war, or a course of misfortunes in the progress of it. The spirits of that nation have been continually kept up by the flattering accounts sent over, of our being weary of the contest, and on the point of submission. Their ministers, as appears by their intercepted letters, have been themselves so far deceived as to expect daily those submissions, and to have the pleasure of laying them before the King. We may, perhaps, be able to guess a little by the King's speech at the approaching new session of Parliament, whether they still continue under this delusion. As long as it subsists, peace is not to be expected.

A loan has been proposed to be obtained for us of the States of Holland on the credit of this government. All public operations are slow in that country; and, though the affair is at length said to be concluded, it is not yet executed. Considerable advances have, however, been made here in expectation of being reimbursed by it. The last aids granted us have been so absorbed by my payment of the drafts on Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, and acceptance of those for the enormous unexpected purchases in Holland, which were to have gone in Captain Gillon's ship, but left behind, that I shall have nothing to spare for extraordinaries, unless

some of the Holland loan comes soon into my hands. I am now told, from Amsterdam, that the two ships freighted there to carry those goods are detained, as their contract was to sail under convoy of the *South Carolina*, which left them; and they must now take more men to defend them, and of consequence claim a higher freight, and to have it paid before they sail, unless I will buy the ships, and send them on account of Congress, neither of which is in my power to do. It was with reluctance I engaged in that affair, having little confidence in Captain Gillon's management, and fearing some embarrassment of our credit.

I consented, in fine, to engage for the payment of ten thousand pounds sterling, being the value of the goods suitable for Congress, said to be already shipped in that vessel; and, as there was said to be still some room, and she was thought a safe conveyance, I concluded to furnish an additional sum to fill that supposed vacancy, which I limited to five thousand pounds sterling more. You will judge of my surprise, when I saw the accounts of that additional purchase, which amounted, instead of five, to fifty thousand pounds sterling. I at first absolutely refused to pay for them. But Captain Jackson came to me from thence express; urged, that the purchase was made by order of Colonel Laurens; that the goods were on board; that, if I would not undertake to pay for them, they must be relanded, and returned or sold, which would be a public disgrace to us; that they were all articles exceedingly wanted in America, &c. &c. In fine, I was prevailed on, and accepted the bills, and was obliged to go with this after-clap to the ministers, a proceeding always disagreeable, after the dispositions of the funds of the year have been arranged; and more so in this case, as the money was to be paid for the manufactures of

other countries, and not laid out in those of this kingdom, by whose friendship it was furnished. This fresh grant was at first absolutely refused; at length I obtained it, and I hoped the difficulty was over.

But, after all, the officers declare the ship was overloaded, that there was not room to lodge the people and provisions, nor to act in fighting her; the goods are turned out into two other ships, those are left, and it is now proposed to me, either to buy them, or to advance a freight nearly equal to their value. I cannot make a new demand for this purpose; and I shall not wonder if this government, observing how badly our shipping and transporting the supplies are managed, should take that business for the future entirely into their own hands, as they have begun to do in the case of replacing the cargo of the *Marquis de Lafayette;* and, indeed, till some active, intelligent person, skilled in maritime affairs, is placed here as consul, I cannot but think it will be much better executed, and more for our advantage. Some considerable parts of that new cargo are already shipped, and the rest I hear are in great forwardness.

The very friendly disposition of this court towards us still continues, and will, I hope, continue for ever. From my own inclination, as well as in obedience to the orders of Congress, every thing in my power shall be done to cultivate that disposition; but I trust it will be remembered, that the best friends may be overburdened; that, by too frequent, too large, and too importunate demands upon it, the most cordial friendship may be wearied; and, as nothing is more teasing than repeated, unexpected large demands for money, I hope the Congress will absolutely put an end to the practice of drawing on their ministers, and thereby obliging them to worry their respective courts for the

means of payment. It may have otherwise very ill effects in depressing the spirit of a minister, and destroying that freedom of representation, which, on many occasions, it might be proper for him to make use of.

I heartily congratulate you, Sir, on your being called to the honorable and important office of President, and wish you every kind of prosperity.

Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, and believe me to be, with great and sincere esteem and respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MESSRS. KORNMANN.

Relative to a Claim of Relationship with Dr. Franklin.

Passy, 21 November, 1781.

GENTLEMEN,

Enclosed is the answer you desire to the letter sent me from Königsberg. I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

Passy, 21 November, 1781.

MADAM,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me the 26th of last month; in answer to which I ought to inform you, that I was born in America, now near seventy-six years since, that I never was in Ireland till the year 1772, which was for a few weeks only, and I did not pass thence to America with any person of my name, but returned to England; nor had I ever any knowledge of the John Franklin you mention. I have exact accounts of every person of my family since the year 1555, when it was established in England, and am certain, that none of them but my-

self since that time was ever in Ireland. The name of Franklin is common among the English of the two nations, but there is a number of different families who bear it, and who have no relation to each other. It would be a pleasure to me to discover a relation in Europe, possessing the amiable sentiments expressed in your letter. I assure you I should not disown the meanest. I should also be glad if I could give you a satisfactory account of your family; but I really know nothing of them. I have therefore not the honor of being related to them, but I have that of being, Madam, yours, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THOMAS POWNALL.

Passy, 23 November, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor by Mr. Hobart. I caused an application to be made to Almon in behalf of Mrs. Barry, but do not learn that it is like to meet with any success.* As the transaction was between yourself and him, no other person but you can claim with authority. I must therefore beg for the poor good woman's sake, that you would do something effectual in it.

I also request that you would send the copies you mention to me here, directed to the care of Mr. Bowen at Ostend; and that the plate may be packed with them.

I wish most heartily with you, that this cursed war was at an end; but I despair of seeing it finished in my time. Your thirsty nation has not yet drunk

* Mrs. Barry was the daughter of Lewis Evans, who published a geographical account of some parts of America, with an improved map. Mr. Evans had died, and his daughter, who was now at Tunis, was to receive the profits of the sale. Almon was the publisher.

enough of our blood. I am authorized to treat of peace whenever she is disposed to it; but I saw inconveniences in meeting and discoursing with you on the subject, or with any one not avowed by your ministry; having already experienced such, in several instances. Mr. Hobart appeared not fully acquainted with your ideas, and, as he could not communicate them, I could make no judgment of them. My best wishes attend you, being with the old, long continued esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Capitulation of Lord Cornwallis. — General Greene.

Passy, 26 November, 1781.

SIR,

I sent forward last Saturday some packets and letters for you, which I hope got to hand in time. Most heartily do I congratulate you on the glorious news!* The infant Hercules in his cradle has now strangled his second serpent, and gives hopes that his future history will be answerable.

I enclose a packet, which I have just received from General Washington, and which I suppose contains the articles of capitulation. It is a rare circumstance, and scarce to be met with in history, that in one war two armies should be taken prisoners completely, not a man in either escaping. It is another singular circumstance, that an expedition so complex, formed of armies of different nations, and of land and sea forces, should with such perfect concord be assembled from different

* The capitulation of Lord Cornwallis's army.

places by land and water, form their junction punctually, without the least retard by cross accidents of wind or weather, or interruption from the enemy; and that the army, which was their object, should in the mean time have the goodness to quit a situation from whence it might have escaped, and place itself in another whence an escape was impossible.

General Greene has done wonders too in Carolina. I hear that a reinforcement was to be sent to him from the army in Virginia, and that there are hopes of his reducing Charleston. You have probably in the enclosed packet the account of his last great action. Count de Grasse sailed on the 30th with the fleet and part of the land forces. His destination is not mentioned. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Proposed Treaty of Alliance between France, Holland, and the United States.

Amsterdam, 26 November, 1781.

SIR,

I presume you have a copy from Congress of their instructions to me of the 16th of August;* but, as it is possible it might be otherwise, I have enclosed one. I have communicated them to the Duke de la Vauguyon. I shall do nothing in the business without communicating it beforehand to him, with the most entire confidence, and receiving his approbation and advice. He informs me, that he has not yet received any instructions from his court respecting it. These instructions

* Instructions for proposing a treaty of alliance between France, Holland, and the United States. See *Secret Journal of Congress*, Vol. II. p. 470.

have arrived at a very proper time to counteract another insidious trick of the British ministry, in agreeing to the mediation of Russia for a separate peace with Holland.

With unfeigned joy I congratulate your Excellency on the glorious news of the surrender of Cornwallis to the arms of the allies. How easy a thing would it be to bring this war to a happy conclusion, if Spain and Holland would adopt the system of France, and coöperate in it with the same honor and sincerity. There is nothing wanting but a constant naval superiority in the West Indies, and on the coast of the United States, to obtain triumphs upon triumphs over the English, in all quarters of the globe. The allies now carry on the war in America with an infinite advantage over the English, whose infatuation, nevertheless, will continue to make them exhaust themselves there, to the neglect of all their possessions in other parts of the world. I have the honor to be, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Financial Difficulties of the United States. — Necessity of further Assistance from France. — Preparations for another Campaign.

Philadelphia, 26 November, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

The Marquis de Lafayette, who has obtained leave to revisit his family for the winter, does me the honor to be the bearer of this, and duplicates of two former letters to you. The degree of estimation in which he is held here, you will collect from the enclosed resolutions relative to him, so that you may converse free-

ly with him, and I doubt not that he will be able to satisfy your inquiries on many important questions relative to this country; on which account I may confine myself more to general heads, than I would otherwise do.

As to intelligence, there is little of importance, the army all having gone into winter quarters after the late glorious campaign, the enemy having been defeated on every hand. A party of about six hundred of them, who fell upon the western frontier of New York, were the last that quitted the stage; having been driven off by an inferior number of militia, with the loss of their leaders, and many privates killed, and about fifty, including the wounded, made prisoners. A body of troops is detached to the southward to reinforce General Greene, with orders to attempt Wilmington on their way, which the enemy occupy with about five hundred men, and keep up a connexion with the disaffected counties in North Carolina.

We have not in a long time heard either from you or Mr. Jay, so that we are much in the dark respecting the probable prospect of a negotiation this winter, or rather are led to conclude from your silence, that the prospect is extremely remote; in which case, all your objects will concentre in preparing for the ensuing campaign, and directing the operations as far as possible to this country. The success of the combined operations this summer will give great weight to your arguments, especially as they are such as would deserve, independent of that, the most serious attention. But, Sir, you will have a difficult card to play, to induce France to do what not only our but her interests essentially require. Never was there a time in which money was more necessary to us than at present. The total abolition of paper, the length of the war, the restricted commerce we have carried on for

the first five years of it, the arrears of debts, and the slender thread by which public credit hangs, put it totally out of our power to make any great exertions without an immediate supply of money.

Taxation will be carried as far as it can go; but this will fall very far short of our wants. The richest nations in Europe, unable to carry on a war by taxation only, are compelled to borrow. How then will it be expected, that a nation, which has had every difficulty to struggle with, an enemy in the heart of its country, and all its considerable towns at one time or another in their possession, a superior navy on its coasts, and the consequential ruin of its agriculture and commerce, how, I say, can it be expected, that such a nation should find resources within itself for so long and bloody a war? And yet, in this situation, we are alarmed by our advices from you, by representations from the minister of France, by assurances from every quarter, that we must expect no further assistance in money. Surely it is not possible, that France, after having done so much for us, after having brought us within view of the desired haven, should oblige us to lose the advantage of all she has done; and yet be assured, that the most serious consequence may attend her stopping her hand at this critical time. Public credit, which is growing very fast, will drop to the ground. The contracts made for the ensuing campaign must be given up; the troops, who were made to expect pay in specie, will be dissatisfied; and, upon the least ill fortune, a failure in supplies will show their discontents; recruiting will be checked, and the conclusion of the war on those advantageous terms, which one vigorous exertion next spring in this country would secure, will be postponed to a later period, when in fact all we wish, to enable us to accomplish these great ob-

jects, is less than one year's continuance of the war will cost France.

You will, therefore, show the necessity of setting our credit upon a firm basis, the prospect we have of accomplishing it, from the great confidence in the integrity and abilities of the financier, from the economy which is introduced into our departments, from the industry which money excites, and which a fluctuating medium had destroyed, and from the total debility which must attend another shock to public credit.

You are perfectly acquainted, Sir, with the natural resources of the country; you know the value of our exports, and the security they afford for any debt that we may contract; in short, there are a thousand arguments on this subject, which will suggest themselves to you, not one of which will you, upon this occasion, omit to urge, since you must be perfectly convinced of its importance in every view, both to France and to us. The Superintendent will write more fully upon this subject, which relates so particularly to his department.

I would beg leave to remind you of another want, which we depend on your representations, and the good dispositions of the court of Versailles, to remove. The chase here seems to be pretty well over, the enemy, tired of running across the country, have taken to their burrows, and the whole business, that remains to us, is to take measures for unearthing them next spring. In order to this, ships are absolutely necessary. The situation of New York and Charleston renders them untenable against a naval force, and extremely strong against an attack by land; besides that success in such an operation would not be decisive, since, after putting us to immense expense of men and ammunition of every kind, while they keep the com-

mand of the water, they might change their position and be as troublesome as ever. At any rate, the reduction of both these places, from their distance, and the difficulty of removing the men and stores, cannot be effected the same campaign without a naval force, and, with it, it will be the business of a few weeks. The advantage to France, independent of her interests as they stand connected with ours, in keeping a great naval force on this continent, is obvious.

1st. The expense to which they put the English, by obliging them to maintain an equal force at this distance from home, at four times the cost at which the French navy may be maintained in this country; which, with proper management, need not exceed what they expend even in France.

2dly. The number of seamen they employ in the transport service, being so many deducted from what might supply their navy, with the same expense as if so employed.

3dly. The protection afforded to the trade on this coast, and the prospect of capturing the enemy's victuallers, and the consequent ruin of their affairs.

4thly. But, above all, the decided advantage it will afford our combined operations, and the speedy termination of the war, by an advantageous peace. It is true, France may have other objects, which may interfere with these. To this we can say nothing; she must judge for herself. All we can do is, to point out what we conceive will be most useful to her as well as to us, and submit to her determination. It would be well, however, if we were apprized of it as soon as possible.

If a negotiation should open this winter, or there should be a probable prospect of it, you will do me the favor to give me the earliest advices of it. There

are many delicate points, on which you would like to know the sentiments of people on this side of the water, which I will endeavour to acquaint you with. I should inform you, that Congress have discharged the commission for negotiating a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, and taken that burden from Mr. Adams's shoulders; that, in compliment to the Marquis de Lafayette, they have made him the bearer of a letter to the King of France, which I enclose; that, in answer to your favor of the 11th of June, they have passed the enclosed resolution.

Mr. Morris will write to you on this subject, and enable you to discharge the bills. Should France send a fleet next spring, it would be advantageous to have it unincumbered with such orders, as may prevent its taking advantage of circumstances. This has unhappily prevented this campaign from being absolutely decisive. But neither this, nor any other great objecs can escape your observation, bent as it is upon promoting the happiness of your country.

In order to enable you to meet the claim of the Tories to the property that has been confiscated, I am endeavouring to collect for you an accurate account of the damages wantonly done by the enemy in this country, which will at least serve to set against that claim. Congress are preparing for an active campaign. They have directed eight millions of dollars to be raised by tax. There is not, however, the least idea that this, or even one half of it, will be collected in the time specified; you will not, therefore, suffer the court to deceive themselves, by hopes of exertions founded on this measure, but urge again and again the absolute necessity of supplying money. I have conversed so freely with the Marquis de Lafayette on the general state of our politics, that I would rather

refer you to him, than trouble you with a longer letter on the subject.

I cannot, however, close this, without desiring you to inquire, whether any intercepted letters from Mr. Deane to persons in this country have been published in Europe. Rivington has given us many, which are generally believed to be his. The Marquis will satisfy your inquiries about them. I am, dear Sir, with sentiments of the highest respect and esteem, &c.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

FROM ROBERT MORRIS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Impolicy of the Purchases in Holland. — Disposition of the American People towards the French.

Philadelphia, 5 December, 1781.

SIR,

I was yesterday morning favored with yours of the 12th of September, enclosing third copies of your two letters of the 26th of July, also a copy of Count de Vergennes's letter to you of the 23d of August. I find by these letters, that the idea I had entertained, as to the advances made by the court, was not so favorable as the truth, and that the ten millions of livres, or five millions of florins to be borrowed in Holland, will be over and above those advances. How much pleasure I receive from that circumstance, you will easily conceive. It is an additional pleasure, that the labor of adjusting the matters, mentioned in mine of the 27th of November, will be saved to you.

I am much surprised to find so large purchases made on account of the United States in Holland. If every thing else were equal, the generous conduct of France towards us has been such, that I cannot but think

that every possible preference ought to be given to the manufactures of that nation. But there is, in my opinion, very essential preference of a different kind. The position of Amsterdam is unfavorable, in a war with England, to a commerce with this country. France also can, and I suppose will, give convoy to the articles procured there. But I will dwell no longer on the subject, for I trust that nothing of the kind will happen hereafter.

Should the loan be obtained, you will be so kind, Sir, as to deposite one million of florins with Mr. Grand, to whom I will pray you to deliver the enclosed letter. I shall, in consequence, not draw upon you for a million of livres, in favor of Messrs. Le Couteulx & Co., as I intended; and, in like manner, I beg leave to revoke what I have said on the subject of paying all balances into their hands. One million of florins you will also be pleased to deposite with the house of Grand, at Amsterdam, sending me the precise address of both, so that I can direct my bills properly to them. Nearly one million will be necessary to pay the invoice sent. The remaining two millions, I wish may be shipped from France in gold, by proper vessels of war; which, I dare say, will readily be provided by M. de Castries.

I perceive, you have not written to Congress on the subjects mentioned in the letter of the Count de Vergennes of the 23d of August, which I am glad of. The more that an opinion prevails here, that we must succour ourselves, the more we shall do it; and, therefore, I shall not communicate what you have said, for the present; but, as the best acknowledgment, I shall endeavour to further the operations against the common enemy, and draw forth all our resources for an early and vigorous campaign. The splendid and im-

portant success, which has crowned the combined arms in Virginia, is, I hope, only an earnest of what is to be done next year. These are the returns, which we shall make to the King, for the aid he so generously affords. And I have a very particular satisfaction in assuring you, that, throughout this country, a strong attachment to the French nation is daily taking place of that blind partiality, once felt for every thing, which had the name of English. Let me add, for your use, a piece of mercantile information, lately communicated to me from unquestionable authority. The demand for French goods in this country has raised the prices in France from twenty to thirty per cent. The importations have reduced the prices here nearly twenty per cent, and the exchange, you already know, has been raised considerably.

I shall say nothing to you in this letter on the subject of future supplies, because I feel a conviction, that you will obtain such as may be necessary. I will only repeat, what I have often said, let them be early. I enclose a letter to M. de Fleury, which you will either deliver or not, as may best answer your purposes. I hope often to have the pleasure of hearing from you, and I pray you to believe me to be, with very great truth, dear Sir, &c.

ROBERT MORRIS.

TO MRS. C. EDES.

Mr. Laurens's Imprisonment in the Tower.

Passy, 13 December, 1781.

MADAM,

I return enclosed the letter from my friend, Mr. Bridgen, which I received from you last night. You will be so good as to acquaint him, in answer to his

first question, *if any fund was established for the support of Mr. Laurens*, that, being informed about the middle of last month by a friend in London of Mr. Laurens's being in want of money, I wrote on the 19th to Mr. Hodgson, a merchant in Coleman Street, in whose hands I had lodged cash for the support of prisoners, to hold one hundred pounds of it at the disposition of Mr. Laurens; and I since hear, that, on a like intimation to Mr. Adams in Holland, he has ordered another one hundred pounds to be applied to the same purpose. I have never heard that any fund was established in America for the use of that gentleman; probably it has not been known there, that he had need of it.

The second question, *if any measures had been taken for his relief*, will be answered by acquainting Mr. Bridgen, that the Congress passed a resolution to offer the exchange of General Burgoyne for him, and empowered me to make the offer; that Mr. Burke, having written to me in favor of his friend, General Burgoyne, on a supposition that the Congress intended to recall him, I sent a copy of the resolution to Mr. Burke, and requested he would charge himself with the negotiation. I have since heard nothing, either from Mr. Hodgson or Mr. Burke; and, as it is said a packet was lately lost between Ostend and England, I begin to fear my letters have miscarried, and shall by the first post send copies. I wish Mr. Bridgen would, however, apply to both those gentlemen, learn what has been done, and through you acquaint me with it. I beg you would assure Mr. Bridgen of my best wishes and affectionate attachment. I hope his affairs in Carolina have been settled to his mind. With much esteem, I have the honor to be, Madam, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. About the beginning of the year, having heard a report, that Mr. Laurens was ill used, I wrote a little remonstrance to Sir Grey Cooper on the occasion; who replied, by acquainting me, that on inquiry he found the report to be groundless; and by sending me a letter he had received from the Lieutenant of the Tower, which assured him, in the strongest terms, that Mr. Laurens was perfectly satisfied with the treatment he received, and frequently expressed his thankfulness for the same. This made me easy, hearing nothing afterwards to the contrary, till lately.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Scheme of a Loan proposed by John de Neufville of Amsterdam.

Passy, 14 December, 1781.

SIR,

I duly received your Excellency's favors of the 1st and 6th instant. I wrote to you by Mr. Barclay, who went from hence some days since, and I hope is with you by this time, and that he will, with your assistance, be able to settle every thing relating to the goods. I have received a long letter from Messrs. Neufville, the purport of which is, that they are willing for their parts to deliver the goods to you, but that they cannot control the other owners of the ships, who have a right, by the laws and customs of Holland, to detain the goods for the damage done by Captain Gillon's refusing to sign the charter parties, and hope, that I will not, on account of the conduct of the other owners, refuse to pay the bills, especially as such a refusal would be derogatory to the honor of the United States.

I may be wrong, but my present thoughts on the subject are, that, if by the laws of Holland our goods may be detained in the hands of the ship owners for the fault of Mr. Gillon, by the same laws the property of one of these owners may be detained in our hands for the fault of his partners; and that it as much concerns the honor of Holland, that our goods should be delivered to us, as it concerns the honor of America, that we should pay for them when delivered. And I farther think, that, if a merchant in Holland, happening to have any of my property in his possession, may, by the laws of his country, detain the same till I pay him whatever he shall please to demand, as indemnification for an injury supposed to be done him by some other person, Holland is by no means a safe country for Americans to trade with, nor a Dutch merchant a safe depository for the property of a stranger, or to be the consignee of merchandise sent into his country.

You desire a copy of the terms on which he offered to borrow money for us. At present, I only send you an extract of the principal points, much of the writing being matter of form. The first proposition is, "That, for the security of this loan of two millions of gilders, Holland currency, *we engaged and hypothequed* (his words) to said Mr. John de Neufville and Son, of Amsterdam or their representatives, as we do engage and hypotheque to them in the name of the whole Congress of the thirteen United States of North America, generally, all the lands, cities, territories, and possessions of the said thirteen States, which they may have and possess at present, and which they may have or possess in the future, with all their income, revenue, and produce, until the entire payment of this loan and the interests due thereon." My observation upon this was, that it demanded an extravagant security for a

trifling sum; that it was lending little more than a gilder on each inhabitant's estate, and that it was absurd to require a mortgage on my estate for the loan of a gilder. He answered, that this was usual in all loans made in Holland to foreign states, and that the money could not otherwise be obtained.

The second proposition was (*verbatim*, as the first), "That out of the produces again through all those thirteen States of America, shall be sent over and shipped to Europe, and chiefly, or as much as possible, to the port of Amsterdam, during the ten years of this loan, the double of one tenth part of this loan to the value of four hundred thousand gilders, which, as far as is possible, they will come to Amsterdam, shall be sold there by Mr. John de Neufville and Son, and what goes to other ports, by their correspondents, and the money kept at their disposal for the use of Congress, at least during the first five years; and, during the last five years of this loan, one half of this money is to serve to discharge every year one tenth part of the money borrowed, engaging, that, before the end of the tenth year, there will be remitted in such a manner, and left in the hands of said John de Neufville and Son, of Amsterdam, a sufficient sum of money to discharge this whole loan, with the interest due thereon."

You will observe, that this article is obscurely expressed. I was obliged to demand an *éclaircissement* in conversation. The conversation was also difficult to understand, M. de Neufville's English not being then of the clearest. But from the whole, after much discourse, I gathered that we were to send over every year for the first five years in tobacco, rice, indigo, codfish, oil, &c. &c., the value of four hundred thousand gilders, to be sold by Messrs. John de Neufville

and Son for our use, on a commission of five per cent, and that the money was to remain in their hands to enable them to pay off in the last five years the principal of the loan, though one half of it was to remain in their hands till the end of the term. A subsequent article also provides that one hundred thousand gilders more should be annually sent over in produce to them, and sold, to discharge the interest.

My objections were, that, if we were able to purchase produce in value two millions of gilders to lodge in the hands of Messrs. de Neufville and Son, we might use that sum in our affairs at home, and should have no occasion to borrow it in Holland; and that, if we were to buy up this value of produce with the money borrowed, and to lodge it in the hands of those gentlemen, it would be borrowing money to give them the use of it for a number of years without interest, while we were paying interest for it ourselves.

One would think this project, if it could take, might be sufficiently profitable for these gentlemen; but in another paper, part French, part English, proposed for me to sign, it was to be stipulated, that, after exchanging for the new promises all those transacted by Messrs. Fizeau and Grand to the amount of forty or fifty thousand gilders, which exchange was to be made without charge; "pour le reste de cet emprunt il leur (Messrs. de Neufville et fils) sera alloué, outre les conditions d'intérest, &c., contenues dans les termes y stipulés, un per cent. d'intérest, savoir, dix per cent. une seule fois sur les sommes qu'ils négocieront; et *en outre* deux per cent. *encore*, y compris toutes les allouances ordinaires et extraordinaires, fraix à faire, et toute commission, sans qu'ils pourront jamais rien exiger de plus à ce sujet."

Very gracious terms these! by which, after stopping

a tenth part of the sum borrowed, they would be content with two per cent upon the rest to defray charges.

Besides this, I was led to understand, that it would be very agreeable to these gentlemen, if, in acknowledgment of their zeal for our cause and great services in procuring this loan, they would be made by some law of Congress the general consignee of America, to receive and sell upon commission, by themselves and correspondents in the different ports and nations, all the produce of America, that should be sent by our merchants to Europe. On my remarking the extravagance and impossibility of this proposition, it was modestly reduced to the following, wherein I am supposed to say and sign;

"Je veux bien encore, pour les engager (Messrs. de Neufville et fils) à suivre avec le même zèle qu'ils y ont employé jusqu'ici pour les intérests de l'Amérique, appuyer de mes recommandations leur solicitations auprès du Congrès, pour qu'il leur soit accordé pour la suite le titre de *Commissioners for trade and navigation and Treasurers of General Congress, and every private State of the thirteen United States of North America, through the Seven United Provinces;* dont il leur sera alloué commissions regulières et usitées de commerce, payement, et emprunt, tels que d'honnêtes négociants pourront les passer sans en pretendre jamais d'autre appointement. Donné à Passy, le, &c."

By this time, I fancy, your Excellency is satisfied, that I was wrong in supposing John de Neufville as much a Jew as any in Jerusalem, since Jacob was not content with any per cents, but took the whole of his brother Esau's birthright, and his posterity did the same by the Canaanites, and cut their throats into the bargain; which, in my conscience, I do not think Mr. John de Neufville has the least inclination to do

by us, while he can get any thing by our being alive. I am, with the greatest esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM WILLIAM ALEXANDER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 15 December, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR,

I told you, the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you at Passy, that I would make a trip to London, but had no notion it would be so soon. On coming to town last evening, I found such pressing letters, that I propose setting off this evening, or tomorrow at latest. I would have called, if possible, to receive your commands, but, as I am pinched in time, I must content myself with sending for them. The bearer will call for them an hour after receiving this letter.

I shall probably be interrogated about the dispositions in this country to peace. My own idea is, that you seek only your independence, and that *this* country, were that secured, will be moderate in other matters, as the object of the war does not seem to be conquest. Let me know if this is proper language. I notice that a courtly argument has been used in Parliament for continuing the continental war, that withdrawing would make you insolent, and give France exclusive advantages. Were it not proper that this were contradicted flatly? Any commissions you may have will be taken care of, and I shall be back, barring accidents, in three weeks.

Wishing you every thing that is good, I remain, with equal esteem and respect, dear Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

W. ALEXANDER.

TO WILLIAM ALEXANDER.

Passy, 15 December, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for informing me of your intended journey. You know so well the prevailing sentiments here, and mine in particular, that it is unnecessary for me to express them; and, having never been believed on that side of the water, it would be useless. I will say, however, that I think the language you mention very proper to be held, as it is the truth; though the truth may not always be proper.

Wishing you a good voyage, and happy return to your children, I am, with great esteem, dear Sir, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 15 December, 1781.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your favor of September 26th, containing your very judicious proposition of securing the spectators in the opera and play houses from the danger of fire. I communicated it where I thought it might be useful. You will see by the enclosed, that the subject has been under consideration here. Your concern for the security of life, even the lives of your enemies, does honor to your heart and your humanity. But what are the lives of a few idle haunters of play houses, compared with the many thousands of worthy men, and honest industrious families, butchered and destroyed by this devilish war? Oh that we could find some happy invention to stop the spreading of the flames, and put an end to so horrid a conflagration! Adieu, I am ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO CHARLES W. F. DUMAS.

Passy, 19 December, 1781.

DEAR SIR,

I duly received yours of the 11th, by young M. de Neufville, enclosing the pamphlets, of which I gave one the next day to M. Boudoin. It was so long since we had heard from you, that we feared you were sick.

I enclose sundry American newspapers, out of which perhaps something may be drawn for your printers. There are the orders of General Greene after the battle of Eutaw Springs, by which it appears that the militia behaved to general satisfaction. There are also the proceedings relating to Colonel Isaac Hayne, which it may be well to publish, as probably we may soon hear that General Greene, according to his promise in his proclamation, has hanged some of the British officers in retaliation; and the knowledge of these proceedings may operate in his justification. In the German papers there are two dialogues, of which you can best judge, whether the printing of them in Germany may not have some little effect in opposition to Faucitt's *recruiting*.* I suppose this letter may find you at Amsterdam, and therefore I send it under cover to Mr. Adams, with the usual compliments of the approaching season.

B. FRANKLIN.

* William Faucitt was the person employed by the British government to procure troops in Germany for the American service.

FROM BRISSOT DE WARVILLE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Project of a Work on Legislation.

Translation.

Paris, 22 December, 1781.

Sir,

I beseech you to borrow a moment from your important occupations, to cast an eye upon the Prospectus, which I have the honor to send you. The desire of improving our legislation, now so defective, is the object of this enterprise; and I am firmly convinced, that the only means of succeeding is, by collecting all the best works upon this subject. This will give us a common focus, to which rays may converge from every quarter. I have endeavoured to unfold in my theory the principles, which should serve as a guide in this reform; and here I join my voice to others more eloquent. I shall borrow much, especially, from the constitutions of your republic, which owe so much to your wisdom. Though they are the offspring of a stormy period, they are the most reasonable of any yet known, and they are a monument, which puts to shame our Gothic and barbarous laws. I love to persuade myself, that, if Europe is incurable, as some writers pretend, at least these works will not be without their use for the new race now growing up in America, which may derive a benefit both from our folly and our wisdom.

You may be assured, Sir, that the recommendation of those constitutions, and extracts from them, will hold an important place in my work. I should be glad to add some other pieces, besides the few with which I am acquainted, or to be guided by some person well informed on this subject. Permit me for this purpose

to request your assistance, and the benefit of your advice. You love what is good, and you have done good. An enterprise, which has this for its sole object, is therefore worthy of your protection. I am, with respect, Sir, &c.

BRISSOT DE WARVILLE.

P. S. Will you permit me to send you a short paper, on a very simple plan for advancing the reform of the laws throughout all Europe? I should be most happy to put it into your hands, if you can give a moment to it.

TO MISS MARTHA LAURENS.

Account of the Means used for the Release of Mr. Laurens.

Passy, 29 December, 1781.

MADAM,

I received your very sensible letter of the 14th past. Your brother, Colonel Laurens, being here when I received the former, I informed him of the steps I had then taken respecting your good father, and requested him to answer your letter for me. I did suppose he had done it; but his great and constant occupation while here might occasion his omitting it. The purport was, that, on a report of your father's being harshly treated, I wrote in his behalf to an old friend, Sir Grey Cooper, secretary of the Treasury, complaining of it. His answer was, that he had inquired, and found the report groundless; and he sent me enclosed a letter he received from the Lieutenant of the Tower, assuring him, that Mr. Laurens was treated with great kindness, was very sensible of it, thankful for it, and

frequently expressed his satisfaction. On this, I became more easy on his account. But, a little before I received your letter, I had one from Mr. Benjamin Vaughan, who is connected with the family of Mr. Manning, which informed me, that Mr. Laurens was really in want of necessaries; and desired to know if any provision was made for his subsistence. I wrote immediately to Mr. Hodgson, in whose hands I had lodged some money, requesting him to hold one hundred pounds of it at the disposition of Mr. Laurens, and to acquaint Mr. Vaughan with it.

About this time I received two letters; one from Mr. Burke, member of Parliament, complaining that his friend, General Burgoyne, in England on his parole, was reclaimed and recalled by Congress, and requesting I would find some means of permitting him to remain. The other was from the Congress, enclosing a resolve that empowered me to offer General Burgoyne in exchange for Mr. Laurens. Perceiving by Mr. Burke's letter, that he was very desirous of obtaining his friend's liberty, and having no immediate intercourse with the British ministry, I thought I could not do better than to enclose the resolve in my answer to his letter, and request him to negotiate the exchange. When I received yours, I was in expectation of having soon an answer from Mr. Burke and Mr. Hodgson, which would enable me to give you more satisfactory information. I, therefore, delayed writing to you from post to post, till I should hear from them; and, fearing from the length of time that my letters had miscarried, I sent copies of them.

It is but yesterday that I received an answer from Mr. Hodgson, dated the 21st instant, in which he writes me, "I received your favor of the 19th ultimo, and immediately acquainted Mr. Vaughan with your direc-

tions concerning the supplying Mr. Laurens. He has been acquainted therewith; but hitherto no application has been made to me for the money; whenever it is, you may be assured it shall be complied with." No answer has come to my hands from Mr. Burke; but I see, by the newspaper Mr. Hodgson sends me, that he has endeavoured to execute the commission. I enclose that paper for your satisfaction, together with a copy of your father's petition to Parliament, on which I do not find that they have yet come to any result; but, observing that he makes no complaint in that petition, of his being pinched in the article of subsistence, I hope that part of our intelligence from London may be a mistake. I shall, however, you may depend, leave nothing undone, that is in my power, to obtain his release; and I assure you, that the thought of the pleasure it must afford a child, whose mind is of so tender a sensibility, and filled with such true filial duty and affection, will be an additional spur to my endeavours. I suppose Mr. Adams has informed you, that he has ordered another hundred pounds sterling to be paid Mr. Laurens; and I hope you will soon have the happiness of hearing that he is at liberty. With very great regard, I have the honor to be, Madam, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 31 December, 1781.

SIR,

I have received the letter you did me the honor to write me the 27th instant. I shall not enter into an examination of the successive variations and augmentations of your demands on me for funds to meet your

payments. I shall merely remark, that, whenever you shall consider yourself fully authorized to dispose of the proceeds of the Dutch loan, on behalf of Congress, I will propose to M. de Fleury to supply you with the million required, as soon as it shall have been paid into the royal treasury. But I think it my duty, Sir, to inform you, that, if Mr. Morris issues drafts on this same million, I shall not be able to provide for the payment of them, and shall leave them to be protested. I ought also to inform you, that there will be nothing more supplied than the million above mentioned; and, if the drafts, which you have already accepted, exceed that sum, it must be for you to contrive the means of meeting them. I shall make an exception only in favor of those of Mr. Morris, provided they shall not exceed the remainder of the Dutch loan, after deducting the million, which shall be placed at your disposal, and the expenses of the loan. I have the honor to be, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

History of the Proceedings for promoting a Negotiation of Peace. — Lord North. — Propositions for a separate Treaty between England and America.

London, 2 January, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have received the favor of yours of the 15th of December, by Mr. Alexander. I most heartily join with you in the wish, that we could find some means to stop the spreading flames of this *devilish war*. I will not despair. The communications, which he has imparted to me from you, have revived my hopes of peace. I laid them before the minister immediately. We are at

a suspense for the present upon a very material preliminary. I did intend writing to you at the present pause, that we might make our ground good as we go on; but an accident which has happened obliges me to do it without delay. For, having had a most essential question transmitted to me from Lord North for explanation, when I would have applied to Mr. Alexander, I could not hear of him; and now I find, that he has left his hotel these four or five days, and, his return being uncertain, I must apply to you. I will state to you what has passed.

Upon my first interview with Mr. Alexander, he told me, that the late events would make no difference in the prospect of peace; that America had no other wish than to see a termination of this war; that no events would make them unreasonable on that subject, which sentiments likewise your letter expresses; and that no formal recognition of independence would be required. I thought this a very fair opening; but the next point which he explained to me, seemed to be still more material towards peace, viz. that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain, and their allies were disposed to consent to it. I believe, that it has been the unfortunate union of common cause between America and France, which has for the last three years turned aside the wish of the people of England for peace. I verily believe (so deep is the jealousy between England and France), that this country would fight for a straw to the last man, and the last shilling, rather than be dictated to by France. I therefore consider this as the greatest rub out of the way. I have often argued this point with you upon former occasions, having at all times foreseen, that it would be the greatest rub in the road to peace, and I have often stated it to you as an act of *justice* due

to America from her allies, not to drag her through a war of European resentments and jealousies, beyond her original views and engagements; and, moreover, I think the separation of the causes in the negotiation promises much the shortest road to a general peace.

Upon Mr. Alexander's opening thus much to me, I told him, I would apply for the earliest opportunity of laying these matters before the minister. Accordingly on Friday morning, December the 21st, I applied, through the means of the Earl of Guildford, father to Lord North; a nobleman of a most respectable character, advanced in years, and attached by every possible tie to a son now in the most arduous situation. I therefore requested the favor through his hands, as giving me the most conciliatory access to the minister, to whom I was preparing to make an application for peace. After the appointment was made with Lord North for Friday evening, I returned to Mr. Alexander, to consider the specific manner and terms in which I should make my application. It had occurred to me, from what Mr. Alexander had stated to me, that the Conciliatory Bill,* which I had moved in the last Parliament, on the 27th of June, 1780, would still serve as a foundation to proceed upon; I therefore carried it with me.

He told me, that he and you knew the sense of the bill very well, and that it would be entirely consonant to your sentiments, that I should state it to Lord North, as drawing an outline for a negotiation of peace. However, to avoid all errors, I read the bill through to him, and explained the view of each clause, viz. the style of *Provinces of North America*, a general phrase, to

* See this Bill in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 157; and Remarks on the same, p. 267.

avoid any term denoting dependence or independence; the truce for an indefinite term; the articles of intercourse for ten years certain; to restore an amicable correspondence, and to abate animosities; the suspension of certain acts of Parliament; to avoid every possible question of dependence or independence; and to finish the work by a ratification of each article of intercourse as agreed to, thereby to prevent all possible return of war. I compared the articles of intercourse for a short term, and their ratification into a permanent peace, to a well known mode of proceeding in the laws of England, by lease and release, from temporary to perpetual amity and peace.

Upon these grounds, I took my commission from him for Lord North, viz. the question of dependence or independence *sub silentio*, a separate treaty with America, and to state the Conciliatory Bill of June, 1780, as the outline of negotiation. I saw Lord North in the evening, and stated the foregoing propositions to him, as I have now stated them to you. After having stated the compromise *sub silentio* and the separate treaty, I left with Lord North the copy of the bill of June, 1780, together with a paper, entitled *Conciliatory Propositions*, as explanatory of that bill, both enclosed with this. The next morning, viz. Saturday, December the 22d, I saw Mr. Alexander, and reported to him what I had stated to Lord North, and showed him a copy of the paper, entitled *Conciliatory Propositions*. He told me, that I had executed my commission perfectly to his intelligence of the matter. I should tell you, that, at the conclusion of my conversation with Lord North, we both settled jointly the result thus; "I recommend to your Lordship the propositions, which I have had the honor of stating to you, as *general grounds of a proposed negotiation, leading towards*

peace, under liberal constructions." Lord North said, in answer, "So I understand them."

Upon this footing matters rested for some days. On Sunday last, December the 30th, I received a message from Lord North, through the means of Lord Guildford, requesting an explanation of this point, viz. "Who is authorized to treat on the part of America? whether you or Mr. Adams, or both jointly; and whether the propositions above stated would be acknowledged, as general grounds of negotiation towards peace, by the person or persons authorized to treat; because it was necessary, before he could lay a matter of so great importance before the Cabinet Council, that he should be entitled to say, these propositions and general outlines come to me from responsible and authorized persons." The moment I received the request of Lord North, I agreed entirely with the necessity of an explanation on that head. I had partly expected such an inquiry, and it gave me satisfaction when it came, as I thought it the first reply towards a parley. If the propositions had not gained some attention, it would have been of very little importance to have inquired whence they came. As to the caution itself, it appears to me not only prudent but indispensable. The forms of caution in such cases are the essentials of caution. I had determined on my own account before this message to have written to you, that I might have received your sentiments directly from yourself without any other intervention, that we might proceed with caution and certainty in a matter of such infinite importance. This message has only quickened my despatch. The two points of explanation requested, I take to be these; whether the outlines above recited are properly stated, always considering that they imply no further than *general grounds of negotiation towards*

peace, under liberal constructions; and, secondly, by what authorized person or persons any answer on this subject would be accepted; in short, a requisition of credentials preparatory to a formal answer, which is so much the more necessary on the supposition of a favorable reception of the first hint towards negotiation.

When I last saw Mr. Alexander, viz. about four or five days ago, he had met with some desponding impressions, as if the ministry were indisposed to peace, and that things would not do, &c. He did not tell me upon what ground he had formed such apprehension; however, lest he should have imparted any such by letter to you, I will state that point to you, because it may have infinite ill consequences to be too touchy on such occasions. A premature jealousy may create the very evil it suspects. The ministry in this country are not every thing. The sense of the people, when really expressed and exerted, would be most prevalent. Suppose then it were a proved point, that every man in the ministry were in his heart adverse to peace. What then? Withhold all overtures? By no means. I should advise the very contrary in the strongest manner. I should say, let the overtures be made so much the more public and explicit by those who do wish for peace. It is the unfortunate state of things, which has hitherto bound the cause of France to any possible treaty with America, and which has thereby thrown a national damp upon any actual public exertions to procure a negotiation for peace with America. I have the strongest opinion, that if it were publicly known to the people of England, that a negotiation might be opened with America, upon the terms above specified, that all the ministry together, if they were ill disposed to a man, would not venture to thwart such a measure.

But why should it be supposed, that the ministry,

to a man, are ill disposed to a peace? Suppose them to be half and half, and the public wish and voice of the people in favor of negotiation, it is evident on which side the balance would incline. But why should we seek to throw a damp prematurely upon any chance? Why presume even against any individual? I grant, that it would be a bitter trial of humility to be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the haughty command of France, and I believe every part of the nation would proceed to every extremity before they would submit to that. But, if that touchy point can be provided for *sub silentio*, and if the proposed treaty with America may be carried on free from control by France, let us give the cause of peace a fair trial; at the worst we should be but where we were, if we should fail. But why should we expect to fail, when the greatest rub is removed, by the liberty of entering separately into a treaty? I think it a most favorable event, leading towards peace. Give us a truce with its concomitants, and a little time so given for cooling will have most excellent effects on both sides. Eternal peace and conciliation may then follow.

I send this to you by the quickest despatch, that we may bring this point to a fair issue before the meeting of Parliament. God prosper the blessed work of peace. I am ever yours most affectionately,

D. Hartley.

P. S. *January 8th*, 1782. Since writing this letter, I have seen Mr. Alexander, and shall see him from time to time to communicate with him. I do not suppose I shall have an answer from Lord North, till the preliminary points are so settled, as to enable him to give an answer in form. The ministry might undoubtedly give a short negative, if they thought proper; but

I do not expect that. You may be assured, that I have and shall continue to enforce every argument in the most conciliatory manner to induce a negotiation. I am very sorry for Mr. Alexander's confinement, on his own account, and on that of his friends, and because probably, in the future state of this business, his personal exertions may be very serviceable in the cause of peace. Every assistance and every exertion of mine will always be most heartily devoted to that cause. I have nothing further to add, either upon my own reflections or from my subsequent conversations with Mr. Alexander, to what I have stated in the foregoing letter. If we once make a good beginning upon the plan there stated, I should hope, that such a negotiation, founded on such principles, would promise fair to produce every salutary and pacific consequence in the event.

D. H.

Remarks on the Conciliatory Bill.

In the title and preamble of the bill, the words *Provinces of North America* are used as general words, neither implying dependence nor independence.

Clause i. *The Truce* is taken from the Conciliatory Act of 1778, and is indefinite as to the proposed duration of the truce. Under this clause it might be proposed to negotiate three points, viz. the removal of the British troops from the Thirteen Provinces of North America, and, connectedly with this article, a stipulation for the security of the friends of the British government. The third article might be a stipulation, that the respective parties, during the continuance of the truce, should not either directly or indirectly give assistance to the enemies of each other.

Clause ii. *Articles of Intercourse and Pacification.* Under this clause some arrangements might be settled

for establishing a free and mutual intercourse, civil and commercial, between Great Britain and the aforesaid Provinces of North America.

Clause iii. *Suspension of certain Acts of Parliament.* By this clause a free communication may be kept open between the two countries, during the negotiation for peace, without stumbling against any claim of rights, which might draw into contest the question of dependence or independence.

Clause iv. *The Ratification by Parliament.* The object of this clause is to consolidate peace and conciliation, step by step, as the negotiation may proceed; and to prevent, as far as possible, any return of war, after the first declaration of a truce. By the operation of this clause, a temporary truce may be converted into a perpetual and permanent peace.

Clause v. *A Temporary Act.* This clause, creating a temporary act for a specific purpose of negotiation in view, is taken from the act of 1778.

FROM PROFESSOR EMBSER TO B. FRANKLIN.

Bipontine Edition of the Classics.

Translation.

Deux Ponts, 6 January, 1782.

Sir,

It is not to the avenger of America, nor to the minister of a nation, which has dared to defend so gloriously the sacred rights of humanity, that I address this letter, but to the illustrious sage, who, having long been distinguished in the republic of letters, has been also the light of a new hemisphere, which owes so much to him for its moral and civil existence. Your Excellency will permit me to mention to you an establishment, which, from its origin, has always met with great favor.

We have undertaken to publish in succession, by subscription, a complete collection of ancient Roman authors, of the same size, type, and paper. Twenty-four volumes have already appeared, and the whole collection may be finished in three or four years; a printing press having been put up for that especial purpose. We have also begun the publication of a selection of Greek authors, of the same size, with a Latin translation. The first and second volumes are published, containing the first books of Plato.

I know very well, that the political troubles of America, which is resisting the attacks of a powerful people, jealous of its greatness and glory, prevent that nation from now yielding to the delights of the Muses. But perhaps peace is not far distant. In the hope that your Excellency may be disposed to promote our enterprise, I will mention, that we can engage to deliver in Paris the Latin volumes for forty sols each, and the Greek for four livres. Nothing could be more encouraging for us, than to receive the approbation of Franklin, and to contribute, in however small a measure, to the greatness of a rising world, which is shaking off the chains, the prejudices, and the slavery of our own.

We hope your Excellency will receive with favor these proposals, which come from a society of men of letters, whose views are entirely disinterested and solely prompted by a regard for youth, and will condescend to take them into consideration. Being persuaded, that you will excuse the liberty I have taken, I have the honor to be, with the most profound respect, &c.

EMBSER,

*Professor in the Ducal College.**

* Dr. Franklin became a subscriber to the Bipontine edition of the

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Suggestions respecting the general Terms of Peace. — Boundaries. — Fisheries. — Loyalists. — Restoration of Records and Papers.

Philadelphia, 7 January, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

As it does not appear improbable, that the humiliation and misfortunes of Great Britain may produce the same sentiments, which a spirit of moderation dictates to the other belligerent powers, and lead her to concur with them in their wishes for peace, it cannot be improper to acquaint you with the objects America most wishes to attain, and to furnish you with the arguments on which they found their claim to them. For such is the confidence, not only in the justice of His Most Christian Majesty, but in his friendship, that they firmly persuade themselves, that he will not only pre-

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Classics, as appears by another letter from Professor Embser to him. The following is an extract.

"We obey your Excellency's orders, in forwarding through Mr. Grand, of Paris, the twenty-six volumes of the complete collection of ancient Roman authors, published up to this time, and one volume of the Greek, for the sum of fifty-five livres of France. We hope, that these works will merit your Excellency's approbation. You will remark a difference in the execution, which arises from the circumstance of the first volume having been printed before the establishment of a printing office especially for the purpose. We have thought, that our principal object, for the benefit of youth, should be to give the text according to the best editions, printed with great correctness, and furnished at the lowest possible price; and we have spared no pains to effect it. Each work begins with a life of the author, a literary notice, and a catalogue of editions, and is always followed by the necessary indexes.

"The second volume of Plato, which is finished, could not be sent with this parcel, because we have not yet received the engraving. But it will be delivered with Quintus Curtius and Lucretius, which are now in the press, with the twelfth volume of Cicero." — *Deux Ponts, May 9th*, 1782.

serve for them their undoubted rights, but that he will even go so far, as to procure for them those advantages they may reasonably demand on the close of a successful war; and I am perfectly satisfied, that the loose hints, that a detail of their sentiments may afford you and our other Commissioners, will be strengthened and improved by your lights in such manner, as to come before his Majesty in the most advantageous form.

The first point of discussion will be the *limits of the United States.* The instructions given to Mr. Adams * explain the wishes of Congress on that subject; nor can they admit of many doubts, except so far as they relate to our southern extent; the boundary between us and Canada being very well ascertained by grants, charters, proclamations, and other acts of government, and more particularly by the settlements of people, who are engaged in the same cause with us, and who have the same rights with the rest of the subjects of the United States.

Our western and northwestern extent will probably be contested with some warmth, and the reasoning on that subject be deduced from general principles, and from proclamations and treaties with the Indians.

The subject is undoubtedly intricate and delicate; yet, upon candid investigation, I believe it will appear, that our extension to the Mississippi is founded in justice; and that our claims are at least such as the events of the war give us a right to insist upon. Your situation furnishing you amply with the various documents on which Great Britain founded her claim to all the country east of the Mississippi previous to the treaty of Paris, I will not trouble you with references to them,

* See *Secret Journal of Congress*, Vol. II. p. 225.

which would at any rate be imperfect, from the want, which prevails here, of books and papers. Taking it for granted, that the King of Great Britain was entitled to that extent of country (which he at least cannot contravene), it only remains to examine, how far he considers it as within the limits of some of the United States; because he can no more pretend to abridge those limits, than claim any other right of which the United States are in possession.

His idea of these limits is apparent from charters granted by the crown; and from recent grants made by its representatives in several of the States, it appears, that they considered their authority to grant lands to the westward, as coextensive with the right of Great Britain, unless they were restricted by their interference with other governments. Upon this principle, the servants of the crown in New York granted land on the borders of Lake Erie, to the westward of Niagara. And Virginia, even after the proclamation in 1763, patented considerable tracts upon the Ohio, far beyond the Appalachian Mountains. It is true, the several governments were prohibited at different times from granting lands beyond certain limits; but these were clearly temporary restrictions, which the policy of maintaining a good understanding with the natives dictated, and were always broken through after a short period, as is evinced by the grants above mentioned, made subsequent to the proclamation in 1763. And, indeed, the proclamation itself furnishes a substantial argument of the opinion of Britain, with respect to the right, which some of the States had to extend to the westward of the limits it prescribed; otherwise it would not have been necessary to prohibit their governors from granting, as their patents would, in such cases, have been invalid, and themselves subjected to the

censure of their master, upon whom they were dependent.

Unless, therefore, these proclamations absolutely destroyed the right, they must be considered as proofs of its existence at least, and after they were issued. The slightest examination of them shows, that they did not take away, but restrained, an existing right; and the subsequent grants by the governors evidence, that they were, as is before asserted, mere temporary restrictions. The same reasoning applies to the treaty at Fort Stanwix, and to other agreements taken from treaties with the Indians. Strong evidence in our favor is also found in the map made by the King's geographer, in which Virginia and the Carolinas are laid down as extending to the Mississippi, shortly after the last war. Arguments may be drawn against us by the Quebec Bill; but, as this is one of the laws that occasioned the war, to build any thing upon it would be to urge one wrong in support of another. But this matter may perhaps be seen in a different light, and our pretensions placed upon a more extensive basis, by recurring to general principles, and asking, whence Great Britain derived her right to the waste lands in America.

Evidently from the allegiance, which a subject is supposed to carry with him wherever he goes, even though he dislikes his constitution and seeks one that pleases him better. Upon this principle, the oppressed subjects of Great Britain, seeking freedom in the wilds of America, were supposed to extend to it the sovereignty of the kingdom they had left. The rights of the King of Great Britain, then, to America were incident to his right of sovereignty over those of his subjects that settled America, and explored the lands he claims. For the idea of right derived from mere

discovery, and the vain ceremony of taking possession without planting and continuing that possession, is now fully exploded. If, then, we admit what is necessary to our independence, that the right of sovereignty over the people of America is forfeited, it must follow, that all rights founded in that sovereignty are forfeited with it; and that, upon our setting up a new sovereign in America, the rights which the first claimed, as such, devolve upon the second. Upon this principle, Great Britain is left without a foot of land in America beyond the limits of those governments, which acknowledge her jurisdiction.

It is in vain to say, that the King of Great Britain holds these back lands by a cession from other powers; since those cessions were grounded upon a prior claim, derived through the people of America, and only served to confirm the right, which they gave the King of Great Britain while he was their sovereign, and which he loses with his sovereignty over them. This mode of reasoning is warranted by the practice Great Britain uniformly held, of treating with the Indian nations through their American governors, who have frequently executed with them the most solemn acts, and sometimes extended the King's protection to the nations, who occupy the waste lands, which are the subject of our present claim. The expense of retaining these in friendship almost always devolved upon the respective States, who, till lately, particularly in New York, voted the sums necessary to support smiths among them, and to procure the presents which were annually made them. From hence, then, it follows, that, if the King of Great Britain has any right over the back lands in America, it must be as King of the people of America; ceasing to be King of those people, his right also ceases. If he has no right over the back lands, but

merely as protector of the savage nations that inhabit them, that connexion and duty also devolve upon us, since they evidently claimed that protection from him as King of the colonies, and through the governors of those colonies, and not as sovereign of a country three thousand miles from them. This country having chosen a new sovereign, they may rightfully claim its protection.

There is some reason to believe, that Great Britain considered their rights in many instances as extending no further than their right of preëmption and protection, as may be inferred from passages in the negotiations for a peace with France in the year 1761, referred to in the margin. This suggests a new idea, which, however, I am not warranted by any act of Congress in mentioning, and therefore you will only consider it as the sentiment of an individual. If the mediators should not incline to admit our claim, but determine on restricting our limits, either by the extent of our grants, the course of the mountains, the sources of the rivers, or any other of those arbitrary rules that must be sought for when solid principles are relinquished, perhaps it would not be difficult to bring them to agree, that the country beyond those limits belongs to the nations which inhabit it; that it should enjoy its independence under the guarantee of France, Spain, Great Britain, and America, and be open to the trade of those whose lands border upon them.

This, though restrictive of our rights, would free us from the well grounded apprehensions, that the vicinity of Great Britain, and her command of the savages, would give us. They already possess Canada and Nova Scotia; should that immense territory, which lies upon the rear of the States, from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, be acknowledged to be

vested in Great Britain, it will render our situation truly hazardous. The lands, as you know, are infinitely better than those on the coast; they have an open communication with the sea by the rivers St. Lawrence and the Mississippi, and with each other by those extensive inland seas with which America abounds. They will be settled with the utmost rapidity from Europe, but more particularly from these States. Attachment to the government, freedom from taxes, a prospect of bettering their fortunes, and the fertility of the soil, will invite numbers to leave us. This, coöperating with the leaven of dissatisfaction, which will continue to work here for many years, may produce the most dangerous effects, especially upon the Southern States, which will, from the nature of their soil and husbandry, be thinly settled for many years; while the lands, which lie near them beyond the mountains, will soon be filled with a hardy race of people inimical to them, who, to their own strength, will be enabled to join that of the savages subject to their command.

If it is an object with the maritime powers to lessen the power, and by that means diminish the dangerous dominion, that Great Britain has in some measure usurped over the ocean, they must prevent her possessing herself of the country in question, since, besides the whole fur and peltry trade, that she will thereby engross, the demands of this great country will give a new spring to her manufactures, which, though the Floridas should be ceded to Spain, will find their way into it by the river St. Lawrence, and through the numerous lakes and rivers which communicate with it. Add to this, that settlements are already formed beyond the Appalachian mountains by people who acknowledge the United States; which not only give force to our claims, but render a relinquish-

ment of their interest highly impolitic and unjust. These, and a variety of other reasons, which will suggest themselves to you and the gentlemen joined in the commission with you, will doubtless be urged in such terms as to convince the court of France, that our mutual interests conspire to keep Great Britain from any territory on this continent beyond the bounds of Canada. Should the Floridas be ceded to Spain, she will certainly unite with you on this point, as the security of that cession will depend upon its success.

The *fisheries* will probably be another source of litigation, not because our rights are doubtful, but because Great Britain has never paid much attention to rights which interfere with her views.

The arguments on which the people of America found their claim to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland arise, first, from their having once formed a part of the British empire, in which state they always enjoyed, as fully as the people of Britain themselves, the right of fishing on those Banks. They have shared in all the wars for the extension of that right, and Britain could with no more justice have excluded them from the enjoyment of it, (even supposing that one nation could possess it to the exclusion of another,) while they formed a part of that empire, than they could exclude the people of London or Bristol. If so, the only inquiry is, How have we lost this right? If we were tenants in common with Great Britain, while united with her, we still continue so, unless by our own act we have relinquished our title. Had we parted with mutual consent, we should doubtless have made partition of our common rights by treaty. But the oppressions of Great Britain forced us to a separation (which must be admitted, or we have no right to be independent); and it cannot certainly be contended, that

those oppressions abridged our rights, or gave new ones to Britain. Our rights, then, are not invalidated by this separation, more particularly as we have kept up our claim from the commencement of the war, and assigned the attempt of Great Britain to exclude us from the fisheries, as one of the causes of our recurring to arms.

The second ground upon which we place our right to fish on the Banks of Newfoundland, provided we do not come within such distance of the coasts of other powers, as the law of nations allows them to appropriate, is, the right which nature gives to all mankind to use its common benefit, so far as not to exclude others. The sea cannot in its nature be appropriated; no nation can put its mark upon it. Though attempts have sometimes been made to set up an empire over it, they have been considered as unjust usurpations, and resisted as such, in turn, by every maritime nation in Europe. The idea of such empire is now fully exploded by the best writers.

The whale fishery, in every sea, and even upon the coasts of princes, who do not exercise it themselves, is considered as a common right, and is enjoyed by those nations that choose to pursue it. The cod fishery, upon the Dogger Bank, and other parts of the European seas, is claimed exclusively by no nation. The herring fishery is carried on daily by the Dutch on the coast of England; and, if the Banks of Newfoundland are not equally common, it is because some nations have relinquished their rights, and others find it impossible to exercise them, for want of harbours to receive their vessels, or shores to dry their fish on.

When we say, we are willing to exercise it under these inconveniences, there can certainly be no further dispute about our right, and the only remaining ques-

tions will be the distance that we ought to keep from the shores possessed by the enemy; though, strictly speaking, from our first principle, we have a common right in them.

This subject is treated so much at large by Grotius and Vattel, that I do not think it necessary to detail arguments, which, though urged by people here from their feelings, you will find much better stated there. Give me leave, however, to urge some, that may arise from our particular circumstances. All the New England States are much interested in this point; the State of Massachusetts more particularly; it has no staple; it does not raise its own bread; its principal commerce consisted before the war in fish, which it supplied to the rest of the continent in exchange for rice, flour, &c., and to the West Indies for rum, sugar, and molasses. It shipped little to Europe; first, because it could not fish so cheap as the people of England; secondly, because their fish were not so well cured in general, owing to their fishing at improper seasons, and to their using salt, which is said to be of a more harsh nature, than what the European vessels bring out with them. Should this State and New Hampshire, which is almost in similar circumstances, be excluded from the fisheries, they must be reduced to great distress. It will be impossible for them to pay for the necessaries they must receive from abroad. They will see with pain their sister States in the full enjoyment of the benefits, which will result from their independence, while their own commerce is checked, and their State impoverished. They will consider their interests as sacrificed to the happiness of others, and can hardly forbear to foster that discontent, which may be productive of disunion, and the most dangerous divisions.

An idea has also gone forth, and it is fomented by the disaffected, that France wishes, from interested views, to monopolize the fisheries; or, at least, to exclude all other competitors but Great Britain. Those, who have attended to the disinterested conduct of France during the war, oppose to this sentiment the honor and good faith of their ally, the little interest that he can have in excluding a people from a right, which would not interfere with his, since France does little more than supply herself; and the New England fishery, for the most part, only supplies the continent and islands of America. They see the care with which France has endeavoured to cultivate a good understanding between that kingdom and these States, and they are persuaded, so inconsiderable an object will not be put in competition with the harmony, which ought to subsist between them, or administer food to those unworthy jealousies. And so much does this sentiment prevail in Congress, that their prospects have not induced them to alter your instructions; more particularly as they have received through the minister of France assurances, that his Majesty was pleased with the proofs Congress had given him of their confidence, and that he would in no event make any sacrifices of their essential interests, which necessity should not compel him to do; that he had no reason to apprehend from the events of the war, that such necessity would exist. These events have become so much more favorable since the date of the letter, which contained these assurances, that Congress persuade themselves his Majesty will not be driven to make sacrifices equally painful to him and injurious to us; but that, as we owe our success in war to his magnanimity and generosity, we may be equally indebted to his justice and firmness for an honorable peace.

It is not improbable, that Great Britain will endeavour to make some stipulations *in favor of their American partisans*, who have been banished the country, or whose property has been forfeited. You will doubtless be sensible of the inconvenience and danger, to which their return will subject us, and the injustice of restoring to them what they have so justly forfeited, while no compensation is made to us for the loss of property, and the calamities they have occasioned.

There can be little doubt, that every society may rightfully banish from among them those, who aim at its subversion, and forfeit the property, which they can only be entitled to by the laws, and under the protection of the society, which they attempt to destroy. Without troubling you, therefore, on the point of right, I will just mention a few of the consequences that would result from a stipulation in their favor.

In the first place, it will excite general dissatisfaction and tumults. They are considered here as the authors of the war. Those who have lost relations and friends by it, those who have been insulted by them while starving in prisons and prison-ships, those who have been robbed and plundered, or who have had their houses burned and their families ill treated by them, will, in despite of all law or treaties, avenge themselves, if the real or supposed authors of these calamities ever put themselves in their power; nor will the government be able to prevent what the feeling of the body of the people will justify.

Should they be permitted to reside among us, they will neglect no means to injure and subvert our constitution and government, and to sow divisions among us in order to pave the way for the introduction of the old system. They will be dangerous partisans of the enemy, equally unfriendly to France and to us,

and will show themselves such upon every occasion. To restore their property in many instances is now become impossible. It has been sold from hand to hand; the money arising from it has been sunk by depreciation in the public treasury. To raise the value by taxes, or to wrest the lands from the hands of the proprietors, is equally unjust and impossible. Many of the very people, who would demand the restitution, have grown rich by the spoil and plunder of this country. Many others, who were beggars at the beginning of this war, owe their present affluence to the same cause.

So that at least the account between the two nations should be liquidated, before any claim can be set up by the aggressors. How far it will be possible to obtain a compensation for the injuries wantonly done by the enemy, you will be best able to judge; be assured, that it is anxiously desired.

Give me leave to mention to you the necessity of stipulating for the safe delivery of all records, and other papers of a public and private nature, which the enemy have possessed themselves of; particularly of the records of New York, which Mr. Tryon sent to England; and the private papers of many gentlemen of the law in different parts of the continent, by which the rights of individuals may be materially affected.

Thus, Sir, I have touched upon the principal points, that America wishes to attain in the peace, which must end this bloody war. Perhaps in so doing I have given both you and myself unnecessary trouble, since I have urged nothing but what your own knowledge of the country, and that of the other gentlemen in the commission, would have suggested to you. However, conceiving that circumstances might render it necessary for you to declare, that you spoke nothing more

than the prevailing sentiments of your court, this letter will serve to vouch for the assertion.

Should the Floridas be ceded to Spain, as there is nothing Congress have more at heart than to maintain that friendly intercourse with them, which this revolution has happily begun, it will be essential to fix their limits precisely, for which purpose the instructions to Mr. Adams will serve as your directions.

Affairs here are in the same state that they were when I last wrote, except that the enemy in South Carolina have called in all their outposts, and shut themselves up in Charleston, where they will be closely invested when General St. Clair joins, which must have happened about the last of December. The brilliant expedition to St. Eustatia does the highest honor to the Marquis de Bouillé and the French nation. I flatter myself that it will be of singular use in Mr. Adams's negotiations. I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c. ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

No Negotiations can be opened without the Concurrence of France. — Commissioners authorized to treat.

Passy, 15 January, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received a few days since your favor of the 2d instant, in which you tell me, that Mr. Alexander had informed you, "America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain." I am persuaded, that your strong desire for peace has misled you, and occasioned your greatly misunderstanding Mr. Alexander; as I think it scarce possible, he should have as-

serted a thing *so utterly void of foundation.* I remember that you have, as you say, often urged this on former occasions, and that it always gave me more disgust than my friendship for you permitted me to express. But, since you have now gone so far as to carry such a proposition to Lord North, as arising from us, it is necessary that I should be explicit with you, and tell you plainly, that I never had such an idea; and I believe there is not a man in America, a few *English Tories* excepted, that would not spurn at the thought of deserting a noble and generous friend, for the sake of a truce with an unjust and cruel enemy.

I have again read over your Conciliatory Bill, with the manuscript propositions that accompany it, and am concerned to find, that one cannot give vent to a simple wish for peace, a mere sentiment of humanity, without having it interpreted as *a disposition to submit to any base conditions* that may be offered us, rather than continue the war; for on no other supposition could you propose to us a truce of ten years, during which we are to engage not to assist France, while you continue the war with her. A truce, too, wherein nothing is to be mentioned that may weaken your pretensions to dominion over us, which you may therefore resume at the end of the term, or at pleasure; when we should have so covered ourselves with infamy, by our treachery to our first friend, as that no other nation can ever after be disposed to assist us, however cruelly you might think fit to treat us. Believe me, my dear friend, America has too much understanding, and is too sensible of the value of the world's good opinion, to forfeit it all by such perfidy. The Congress will never instruct their Commissioners to obtain a peace on such ignominious terms; and though there can be but few things in which I should

venture to disobey their orders, yet, if it were possible for them to give me such an order as this, I should certainly refuse to act; I should instantly renounce their commission, and banish myself for ever from so infamous a country.

We are a little ambitious too of your esteem; and, as I think we have acquired some share of it by our manner of making war with you, I trust we shall not hazard the loss of it by consenting meanly to a dishonorable peace.

Lord North was wise in demanding of you some authorized acknowledgment of the proposition from authorized persons. He justly thought it too improbable to be relied on, so as to lay it before the Privy Council. You can now inform him, that the whole has been a mistake, and that no such proposition as that of a separate peace has been, is, or is ever likely to be made by me; and I believe by no other authorized person whatever in behalf of America. You may further, if you please, inform his Lordship, that Mr. Adams, Mr. Laurens, Mr. Jay, and myself, have long since been empowered, by a special commission, to treat of peace whenever a negotiation shall be opened for that purpose; but it must always be understood, that this is to be in conjunction with our allies, conformably to the solemn treaties made with them.

You have, my dear friend, a strong desire to promote peace, and it is a most laudable and virtuous desire. Permit me then to wish, that you would, in order to succeed as a mediator, avoid such invidious expressions as may have an effect in preventing your purpose. You tell me, that no stipulation for our independence must be in the treaty, because you "verily believe, so deep is the jealousy between England and France, that England would fight for a straw, to the

last man and the last shilling, rather than be *dictated to* by France." And again, that "the nation would proceed to every extremity, rather than be brought to a formal recognition of independence at the *haughty command* of France." My dear Sir, if every proposition of terms for peace, that may be made by one of the parties at war, is to be called and considered by the other as *dictating*, and a *haughty command*, and for that reason rejected, with a resolution of fighting to the last man rather than agree to it, you see that in such case no treaty of peace is possible.

In fact, we began the war for independence on your government, which we found tyrannical, and this before France had any thing to do with our affairs; the article in our treaty, whereby the "two parties engage, that neither of them shall conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain, without the formal consent of the other first obtained; and mutually engage, not to lay down their arms until the independence of the United States shall have been formally or *tacitly* assured, by the treaty or treaties, that shall terminate the war," was an article inserted at our instance, being in our favor. And you see, by the article itself, that your great difficulty may be easily got over, as a formal acknowledgment of our independence is not made necessary. But we hope by God's help to enjoy it; and I suppose we shall fight for it as long as we are able.

I do not make any remarks upon the other propositions, because I think, that, unless they were made by authority, the discussion of them is unnecessary, and may be inconvenient. The supposition of our being disposed to make a separate peace I could not be silent upon, as it materially affected our reputation and its essential interests. If I have been a little warm

on that offensive point, reflect on your repeatedly urging it, and endeavour to excuse me. Whatever may be the fate of our poor countries, let you and me die as we have lived, in peace with each other.

Assuredly I continue, with great and sincere esteem, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, 15 January, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Grand tells me, that he hears from Madrid, you are uneasy at my long silence. I have had much vexation and perplexity lately with the affair of the goods in Holland; and I have so many urgent correspondences to keep up, that some of them at times necessarily suffer. I purpose writing fully to you next post. In the mean time I send the enclosed for your meditation. The ill timed bills, as you justly term them, do us infinite prejudice; but we must not be discouraged. I am ever, with the greatest esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

TO JOHN JAY.

Difficulty of meeting the Drafts drawn by Congress on their Ministers in Europe. — Loan in Holland. — Conduct of the Court of Spain in Regard to the United States.

Passy, 19 January, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

In mine of the 15th, I mentioned my intention of writing fully to you by this day's post. But under-

* See Mr. Jay's answer in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. VIII. p. 54.

standing since, that a courier will soon go from Versailles, I rather choose that conveyance.

I received duly your letter of November 21st, but it found me in a very perplexed situation. I had great payments to make for the extravagant and very inconvenient purchase in Holland, together with large acceptances by Mr. Adams, of bills drawn on Mr. Laurens and himself, and I had no certainty of providing the money. I had also a quarrel upon my hands with Messrs. de Neufville and others, owners of two vessels, hired by Gillon to carry the goods he had contracted to carry in his own ship. I had worried this friendly and generous court with often repeated afterclap demands, occasioned by these unadvised (as well as ill advised) and, therefore, unexpected drafts, and was ashamed to show my face to the minister. In these circumstances, I knew not what answer to make you. I could not encourage you to expect the relief desired; and, having still some secret hope, I was unwilling to discourage you, and thereby occasion a protest of bills, which possibly I might find means of enabling you to pay. Thus I delayed writing perhaps too long.

But, to this moment, I have obtained no assurance of having it in my power to aid you, though no endeavours on my part have been wanting. We have been assisted with near twenty millions since the beginning of last year, besides a fleet and army; and yet I am obliged to worry them with my solicitations for more, which makes us appear insatiable.

This letter will not go before Tuesday. Perhaps by that time I may be able to say explicitly, Yes or No. I am very sensible of your unhappy situation, and I believe you feel as much for me. You mention my proposing to repay the sum you want in America. I tried that last year. I drew a bill on Congress for

a considerable sum to be advanced me here, and paid there in provisions for the French troops. My bill was not honored.

I was in hopes the loan in Holland, if it succeeded, being for ten millions, would have made us all easy. It was long uncertain. It is now completed. But, unfortunately, it has most of it been eaten up by advances here. You see, by the letter of which I sent you a copy, upon what terms I obtain another million of it. That, if I get it, will enable me to pay the thirty thousand dollars you have borrowed; for we must not let your friend suffer. What I am to do afterwards, God knows.

I am much surprised at the dilatory and reserved conduct of your court. I know not to what amount you have obtained aids from it; but, if they are not considerable, it were to be wished you had never been sent there, as the slight they have put upon our offered friendship is very disreputable to us, and, of course, hurtful to our affairs elsewhere. I think they are shortsighted, and do not look very far into futurity, or they would seize with avidity so excellent an opportunity of securing a neighbour's friendship, which may hereafter be of great consequence to their American affairs.

If I were in Congress, I should advise your being instructed to thank them for past favors, and take your leave. As I am situated, I do not presume to give you such advice, nor could you take it, if I should. But I conceive there would be nothing amiss in your mentioning in a short memoir, the length of time elapsed since the date of the secret article, and since your arrival, to urge their determination upon it, and pressing them to give you an explicit, definitive, immediate answer, whether they would enter into treaty with us or

not, and, in case of refusal, solicit your recall, that you may not continue from year to year, at a great expense, in a constant state of uncertainty with regard to so important a matter. I do not see how they can decently refuse such an answer. But their silence, after the demand made, should in my opinion be understood as a refusal, and we should act accordingly. I think I see a very good use that might be made of it, which I will not venture to explain in this letter.

I know not how the account of your salary stands, but I would have you draw upon me for a quarter at present, which shall be paid; and it will be a great pleasure to me, if I shall be able to pay up all your arrears.

Mr. Laurens, being now at liberty, perhaps may soon come here, and be ready to join us, if there should be any negotiations for peace. In England they are mad for a separate one with us, that they may more effectually take revenge on France and Spain. I have had several overtures hinted to me lately from different quarters, but I am deaf. The thing is impossible. We can never agree to desert our first and our faithful friend on any consideration whatever. We should become infamous by such abominable baseness. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Correcting Misapprehensions of his Propositions. — Cases in which the United States might treat separately.

London, 24 January, 1782.

My dear Sir,

I received yours of the 15th instant this day. I must take the earliest opportunity of setting you right in one mistake, which runs through your whole letter, and which to you, under that mistake, must be a very delicate point. You seem to apprehend, that America has been stated, in the proposition to Lord North, as "disposed to enter into a separate treaty with Great Britain"; but you meet the condition, viz. in the words immediately following, "*and that their allies were disposed to consent to it.*" There cannot possibly be any supposition of treachery to allies, in any proposition to which they may *consent*. A separate treaty, with the *consent* of the allies of America, was the proposition communicated to me by Mr. Alexander, and which I laid before the minister, and which I reported back again to Mr. Alexander in writing, when I showed him the paper entitled "Conciliatory Propositions," which I took care to reduce to writing, with a view of avoiding mistakes; therefore I have not *misunderstood* Mr. Alexander. I have since seen Mr. Alexander many times, and he has always stated one and the same proposition, viz. that America was disposed to enter into a separate treaty, because their *allies were disposed to consent that they should;* therefore there cannot exist a suspicion of treachery. It occurred to me once, while I was writing, to bar against that misconstruction; but, having specified the *consent of the*

allies of America in the same sentence, I could not conceive such a misconstruction to have been possible.

You have mistaken another point greatly. You say, "a truce for *ten* years." There is not in the bill any such disposition or thought; on the contrary, it is specified in the enclosed paper that it is kept *indefinite*, for the sole purpose of avoiding the suspicion which you have suggested. The truce may be for twenty, or fifty, or one hundred years; in my opinion, the longer the better. But, in any case, what I mean now to state is, the *indefinite* term in the bill. The articles of intercourse are only proposed for ten years certain, just to strew the way with inviting and conciliatory facilities, in the hope that *a little time given for cooling* would confirm a perpetual peace. If I were permitted to be the mediator, I should certainly propose the truce for twenty years; but if no more than ten years could be obtained, I would certainly not refuse such a ground of pacification and treaty. I refer you to several of my letters, two or three years ago, for the justification of my sentiments on that head.

Another point; look at all my letters since 1778, and see if I have at any time suggested any breach of treaty or of honor; on the contrary, I think a faithless nation, if exterminated, would not deserve the pity of mankind. I speak of all I know in the treaty between America and France, and what I think reasonable upon the case itself. If America is further bound than we know of, they must abide by it. I speak to the apparent and public foundation of the treaty, article second, with the provision of *tacitly*, from article eighth; and now I refer you to my letter to you, as long ago as April 10th, 1779; "If beyond this essential and directed end, and upon grounds totally unconnected with that alliance, not upon motives of

magnanimity *for the relief of an innocent people*, but from distinct and unconnected motives of private European sentiments, America should be dragged into the consequence of a general European war, she may apply to France the apostrophe of the poet, speaking in the person of Helen* to Paris,

'Non hoc pollicitus tua.'"

You see, therefore, that our sentiments have been uniform, and, as I think, reasonable, because I still remain in those sentiments.

Suppose, for instance (and you may call it the case of a straw, if you please), that Great Britain and France should continue the war for ten years, on the point of a commissary at Dunkirk, ay or no. Would it be *reasonable*, or a *casus fœderis*, that America should be precluded from a separate treaty for ten years, and therefore involved in the consequential war, after the *essential and direct ends* of the treaty of February 6th, 1778, were accomplished? As far as my judgment goes, upon the knowledge of such facts as are public, I should think it was neither *reasonable* nor a *casus fœderis*. This is the breviate of the argument, in which there is no thought or suggestion of any breach of faith or honor. I did conclude, that France was disposed to give their *consent*, because Mr. Alexander informed me so, and because I thought it reasonable that France should consent, and reasonable that America should enjoy the benefit of that consent. I transmitted it to Lord North, as a proposition temperate and pacific on the part of America, and consented to by their allies, and on no other ground did I transmit or propose it. All that your letter tells me, is, "that

* The writer's memory is at fault here. Nereus, reproaching Paris with his future cowardice, says

"Not such the promise to your [Helen] made."

Horace, Od. I. xv. 32.

America will not break with her allies, and that her Commissioners will not entertain such a thought;" but give me leave to add, that they, as honest men, cannot disdain such a thought more than I do; every honest man ought to disdain the office, or the thought, of proposing a breach of faith to them. I have often told you, that such an office or such a thought shall never be mine.

But you have not told me, that France would not be disposed to consent to a separate treaty of peace for that ally, whose peace was the original declared object of the alliance, in the case supposed, viz. of certain supposed or real punctilios between two proud and belligerent nations, which might possibly involve America for years in a war totally unconnected with the objects of the alliance. Besides, if any rubs should occur in the road to a general peace, France is too proud a nation to say, that, beyond the *policy* of contributing to the separation of America from Great Britain in any contest of rivalship, they cannot meet their rivals in war, without the assistance of America. I cannot conceive, that the minister of a great belligerent nation could entertain such a thought, as affecting their own sense of honor, or be so unreasonable to their allies, as to withhold consent to their peace, when *the essential and direct ends* of the alliance were satisfied. Observe, I do not contend against a general peace; on the contrary, I mean to recommend the most prudent means for producing it. But, as an anxious lover of peace, I feel terrors which dismay me, when I consider the dangers which may obstruct a general peace, arising from the pride and prejudices of nations, which are not to be controlled in their heat by arguments of reason or philosophy.

Can any man in reason and philosophy tell me, why any two nations in the world are called natural ene-

mies, as if it were the ordinance of God and nature? I fear it is too deeply engraved in the passions of man; and for that reason I would elude and evade the contest with such passions. I would strew the road to peace with flowers, and not with thorns. *Haughty*, and *dictating*, and *commands*, are no words of mine; I abhor them, and I fear them. I would elude their force by gentle means, and step by step. In article eighth, there are the following words; "By the treaty or treaties, that shall terminate the war." Let us have one treaty begun, and I think the rest would follow. I fear, when contending passions are raised, lest we should lose all by grasping at too much.

January 25th. I have just seen Mr. Alexander, and have talked the matter over with him. I send you a copy of his sentiments upon it, which, for the sake of avoiding further mistakes, he committed to paper, and which, I think, justify me in saying, that I understood from him, that France was *disposed to give their consent*, as he *explained* it to me, and as I explained it to the minister.* He did not say, nor did

* The following is Mr. Alexander's explanatory note to Mr. Hartley. "As I had not the opportunity of seeing your correspondence at this time, I was unable to prevent the misunderstanding that seems to have arisen. There is no proposition of which I am more convinced, than that, 'nothing can be done without the concurrence of allies.' But, as the chief obstruction towards an accommodation seemed to me to lie in the personal character of some, who have great weight in this matter, and as the object of the war (the independence of America) seems, in the opinion of all men, to be secured, my own opinion was, and still is, that there was so much wisdom and moderation where prejudice prevents us from seeing it, that, provided the ends of the war are accomplished to the satisfaction of all parties, they will be very ready to let us out of it in the most gentle manner, by consenting equally that the business shall go on in one, two, or three separate deeds, as shall be most palatable here; and to doubt that our friends are desirous of finishing the contest, with the approbation of their allies, is to doubt their understanding."

I understand him to say, that he was *authorized* by the French ministry, or by any one else, to declare, that France had bound herself to consent, or that any such requisition had been made to her; but that it was his opinion, that France would consent, and that I might proceed upon that presumption, so far as to recommend overtures of negotiation. Accordingly, the phrase of my letter to you is, that he *explained* to me, *that their allies were disposed to consent.* You see what his opinion is on this day; and, as you have not told me that France will not consent, the *reasonable* probability which still remains with me, for the hopes of opening an amicable treaty, remains as it did.

I could not delay saying thus, by the very first mail, upon a point equally delicate to me as well as to yourself. My dear friend, I beg of you not to think, either that you can be considered as capable of entertaining, or that I should be capable of suggesting, any unworthy or dishonorable propositions. If there has been any misunderstanding, it is now cleared up; and the ground for negotiation remains open as before. I therefore still entertain my hopes. I am ever your affectionate D. HARTLEY.

TO JOHN BARRY.*

Passy, 24 January, 1782.

SIR,

I received your letter of the 17th with pleasure, as it informed me of your safe arrival at Fort Louis. I shall see the Marquis de Lafayette to-day, and we

* Captain in the American navy, having command of the *Alliance* frigate at L'Orient. He had lately arrived from America; and in his vessel the Marquis de Lafayette, Viscount de Noailles, General Duportail, and several other French officers, came as passengers.

will try what can be done towards getting you some French sailors; but I doubt they are too much wanted to be spared to us. You will find, however, a number of Americans at L'Orient, who have lately escaped, or been exchanged, from the prisons of England. Your desire of redeeming more of them is noble, and I heartily wish you success in it. Mr. Barclay, the consul, to whom you should apply in case of wanting any thing for your ship, is now in Holland; but I expect him in a few days. Let me know if, when you return to America, you can take any of the Congress goods, which he will have to send. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, 28 January, 1782.

SIR,

I received, at the same time, your several letters of October 20th, 24th, and November 26th, which I purpose to answer fully by the return of the *Alliance*. Having just had a very short notice of the departure of this ship, I can only at present mention the great pleasure your appointment gives me, and my intention of corresponding with you regularly and frequently, as you desire. The information contained in your letters is full and clear; I shall endeavour that mine, of the state of affairs here, may be as satisfactory. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Having just learned, that the courier is not gone, I have time to enclose two letters from Holland, by which you will see something of the state of affairs in that country. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to Congress, and assure them of my faithful services.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 1 February, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I write to you one line by this mail, only to tell you, that I have seen the minister since I last wrote to you, and that he never did entertain the idea one moment of any propositions being thrown out on your part, in the least degree inconsistent with the strictest honor and faith to the allies. I had no occasion to guard against, or to explain, any such thought, having at all times conveyed the contrary to him in the most explicit terms. I transmit this to you for your full satisfaction. We have had much conversation on the subject of peace, which you may be sure I have most zealously endeavoured to enforce. I should not do him justice, if I did not add, that I believe his wishes are for peace, and that he gives the most serious attention to every argument, and to the suggestion of every practicable means on that subject. I have stated many things for his consideration, and for consultation with others, after which I shall see him again. I heartily wish the result may be favorable to the prospect of peace. I am ever your affectionate

D. Hartley.

TO GUSTAVUS CONYNGHAM.

Passy, 6 February, 1782.

Sir,

I am to acknowledge the receipt of two letters from you since you came to Nantes. In the first you desired a copy of your original commission. I have caused search to be made for it, but can find no trace of it; as, at the time it was given to you, the commis-

sioners kept no minutes of their proceedings, and it is but a few days since I learned from Dr. Bancroft, that it was taken from you at Dunkirk, and sent up with other papers to the Count de Vergennes. The first time I go to Versailles, I will inquire for it. If it is lost, I will send you a certificate that it did exist, though at present not to be found.

In your second letter you desire to know what money Mr. D—— has charged or advanced to you. I never was able to obtain from him a regular amount of the moneys put into his hands for the relief of prisoners in England, but I think he mentions in one of his letters he paid fifty pounds for you. Probably this may not be true; for he is the greatest villain I ever met with, having the last winter drawn on me for four hundred and ninety-five pounds for the support of American prisoners, and applied but thirty pounds to their use. However, he can have no right to demand repayment from you, having received the money from me. With very great esteem and best wishes for your prosperity, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM M. DE BLOME, DANISH AMBASSADOR IN FRANCE, TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Complaints of an Outrage of American armed Vessels on the Coast of Norway.

Translation.

Paris, 6 February, 1782.

Three American vessels, one of which was three-masted, and called the *Norfolk*, Captain Lines, and two brigs, the *Ariel*, Captain Maller, and the *Virginia*, Cap-

tain Hodsheadson, all three armed in Philadelphia, committed a most grievous outrage on the 2d of December last on the coast of Norway, where they seized two English merchantmen and burnt them, after plundering them and sending away their crews. The circumstances are more particularly detailed in the protest enclosed, made on the spot. It has moreover been proved, by the report of his Danish Majesty's grand bailiff at Christiansand, that, the aforesaid American vessels having anchored in the port of Fleckeroe, before their meeting with the Englishmen, and displayed French colors, he had asked of the French consul information respecting their sea papers, and that the latter, on examining their contents, declared that they were not furnished with any letters of marque on the part of Congress. Their conduct proves this also in having burnt their prizes, notwithstanding the offers of ransom made them by the English captains. It therefore follows, that they can only be considered as pirates, whose crimes are greatly aggravated by a manifest infraction of his Danish Majesty's territorial rights.

The undersigned, his Envoy Extraordinary, has received precise orders to communicate these particulars to his Excellency, the Count de Vergennes, requesting, with every possible confidence, the intervention of his Most Christian Majesty with the United States of America, to effect not only the punishment of the guilty persons, but also to obtain an indemnification for the vessels and cargoes that were burnt, of which an exact statement shall be furnished; and this satisfaction is due, to repair the excesses committed on his Majesty's territory. De Blome.

TO JOHN BARRY.

Requesting him to take public Goods to America for the Use of the Troops.

Passy, 10 February, 1782.

SIR,

I have been honored by yours of the 31st past, and am glad to find you are willing to take over some of the public goods. I should not desire it of you, if certain circumstances unforeseen had not rendered it necessary. The goods are for the use of our troops and marine, and were collected at Brest, with an intention of sending them in certain transports, which were prepared for that purpose by the government. The loss of a number of transports, taken by Kempenfeld's squadron, which were carrying stores for the King's fleet and army, making it necessary to replace those stores and forward them immediately, it has been found, that there is no room for ours, and that sufficient new transports cannot readily be obtained.

It has therefore been proposed to me, to put into your ship what you can well receive, and to get freight if I can for the rest, to go under your convoy. Mr. Barclay, who is acquainted with such business, is not yet returned, but I expect him daily. In the mean time I wish you would proceed to Brest immediately, where you will find orders given to the commissary to deliver so much of the Congress stores to you as you shall think fit to receive. My despatches for America shall also meet you there; and, as the quantity of goods may possibly render your ship less fit for sailing or fighting, it would perhaps be well if you concluded to sail with the King's ships, which convoy the transports, and who will probably depart by the middle of

March. Though you have not, as you observe, any orders for this operation, I am persuaded that its utility and necessity, together with this letter, will be deemed a full justification. Endeavours are using to procure freight for the rest, to go under the same convoy, but perhaps it may not be possible to do it in time. If you can engage any from L'Orient, it will be doing great service. The goods in all will make about one thousand tons. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Pressing for further Assistance from France. — Sufferings of American Prisoners in England. — Disturbances in Vermont and New Hampshire.

Philadelphia, 13 February, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

We have been extremely alarmed at some communications, which the minister of France made me from his last letters. They look extremely as if the Count de Vergennes imagined, that neither Spain nor Holland was anxious for our success. They discourage the idea of a loan from them, or even from France. Our letters from Holland confirm these conjectures, so far as they relate to that State. Mr. Adams seems almost to despair of doing any thing with respect to an alliance or loan, and from Mr. Jay we have heard nothing in a very long time, and are ignorant of any steps he may have taken since the appointment of M. del Campo to treat with him.

These mortifying disappointments oblige us, though reluctantly, to call upon France for further assistance.

Your solicitations will be infinitely useful to your country, if they procure for it what I will venture to pronounce essential to their safety. In this spirit, the instruction, which I do myself the honor to enclose, has passed Congress, and a second resolution, which I also enclose, which leads to such information as will enable you to convince the court of France, that their navy can nowhere be more effectually employed to distress the common enemy than in America. I own this consideration is a great relief to my feelings, when we make these importunate demands for money; and I hope it will enable you to press them with some degree of dignity.

That France can aid us is not to be doubted, for it is certain she never carried on a war that distressed her finances less. She has no expensive subsidies to pay; her money is expended either at home, or in a country from whence it returns. Her army is not greatly increased, and her commerce under the protection of her fleets enjoys a security, that it seldom has experienced before. I would not, however, have you suppose, that this is the language I hold here. I know too well the necessity of making every exertion, which in our present impoverished situation we are capable of; and I neglect no means, which my present station puts it in my power to call forth.

Congress have taken every wise measure for that purpose, and I firmly persuade myself, that we shall be able to form the most vigorous coöperation with such force as his Majesty may please to send out. I am confident that the peace must be made in America. Every blow here is fatal to the grand object of the present war; to the hopes, to the wishes, and to the pride of Great Britain. Other conquests she ex-

pects to have restored upon a peace; what is lost here she knows to be lost for ever.

The daily complaints that we receive from seamen confined in England concur with humanity and the national honor, to render some expedient for their relief necessary. I need not, I am persuaded, recommend this to your particular care. We have not yet obtained, at least as far as I can learn, a compensation for the prisoners taken by Paul Jones and returned to England. Is it impossible, either to settle a cartel in Europe, or to have the Americans confined there sent to New York for exchange? The last proposition is so much in favor of England, that it would probably be acceded to; and yet, such is the distress of the people who have been long confined, that it would be desirable to have the offer made. I am just now applied to by a Mrs. Simmonds, whose husband is the mate of a vessel, and has been two years confined in Mill Prison; it would be an act of charity to attempt to procure his relief. You will do me the favor to collect and transmit a list of the numbers confined in England, and, as far as possible, for the satisfaction of their friends, of the names.

We have not a word of intelligence to communicate, unless it be some little disturbances in the country, which has been distinguished by the names of New Hampshire Grants, and Vermont; and which it may be proper to mention to you, since the facility with which the British deceive themselves, and the address with which they deceive others, may render it a matter of moment in Europe, though in fact it is of none in America. The bulk of the people of that country are "*New England Presbyterian Whigs.*" Some of those, in possession of the powers of government, have more address than principle. Finding

themselves exposed to inroads from Canada, they have tampered with that government, and pretended to be willing to form a treaty of neutrality with them during the war, and to return to the obedience of Britain on a peace. This has had the effect they intended, and in some measure defeated an expedition, which the enemy made last year, and retained their main body in inaction at Ticonderoga, while the parties they sent to the westward were beaten and dispersed by our militia. The secret has been discovered, is disavowed by the people, and such measures are now taken, that, by the time the King of Great Britain and his Council (before whom the propositions now lie) have formed a plan in consequence of them, they will be made the means of drawing them into new difficulties.

I presume, that you keep up a constant correspondence with Mr. Jay and Mr. Adams, and assist them with your information and advice. I must beg the favor of you to transmit them this intelligence, that they may be prepared to meet any assertions of the enemy on that head. I take leave to repeat to you my desire to have the papers and political publications sent regularly to this office. I have the honor to be, &c.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Causes of Jealousy between England and France. — The first Step towards a Peace with the United States must be taken by England.

Passy, 16 February, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of the 24th past. You have taken pains to rectify a mistake of mine, relating to the

aim of your letters. I accept kindly your replication, and I hope you will excuse my error, when you reflect, that I knew of no consent given by France to our treating separately of peace, and that there have been mixed in some of your conversations and letters various reasonings, to show, that, if France should require something of us that was unreasonable, we then should not be obliged by our treaty to join with her in continuing the war. As there had never been such requisition, what could I think of such discourses? I thought, as I suppose an honest woman would think, if a gallant should entertain her with suppositions of cases, in which infidelity to her husband would be justifiable. Would not she naturally imagine, seeing no other foundation or motive for such conversation, that, if he could once get her to admit the general principle, his intended next step would be to persuade her, that such a case actually existed? Thus, knowing your dislike of France, and your strong desire of recovering America to England, I was impressed with the idea, that such an infidelity on our part would not be disagreeable to you; and that you were therefore aiming to lessen in my mind the horror I conceived at the idea of it. But we will finish here by mutually agreeing, that neither you were capable of proposing, nor I of acting on, such principles.

I cannot, however, forbear endeavouring to give a little possible utility to this letter, by saying something on your case of Dunkirk. You do not see, why two nations should be deemed natural enemies to each other. Nor do I, unless one or both of them are naturally mischievous and insolent. But I can see how enmities long continued, even during a peace, tend to shorten that peace, and to rekindle a war; and this is, when either party, having an advantage in war, shall

exact conditions in the treaty of peace, that are goading and constantly mortifying to the other. I take this to be the case of your "commissioner at Dunkirk." What would be your feelings, if France should take and hold possession of Portsmouth, or Spain of Plymouth, after a peace, as you formerly held Calais, and now hold Gibraltar? Or, on restoring your ports, should insist on having an insolent commissioner stationed there, to forbid your placing one stone upon another by way of fortification? You would probably not be very easy under such a stipulation. If therefore you desire a peace, that may be *firm* and durable, think no more of such extravagant demands. It is not necessary to give my opinion further on that point, yet I may add frankly, as this is merely private conversation between you and me, that I do think a faithful ally, especially when under obligations for such great and generous assistance as we have received, should fight as long as he is able, to prevent, as far as his continuing to fight may prevent, his friends being compelled again to suffer such an insult.

My dear friend, the true pains you are taking to restore peace, whatever may be the success, entitle you to the esteem of all good men. If your ministers really desire peace, methinks they would do well to *empower* some person to make propositions for that purpose. One or other of the parties at war must take the first step. To do this belongs properly to the wisest. America, being a novice in such affairs, has no pretence to that character; and, indeed, after the answer given by Lord Stormont (when we proposed to him something relative to the mutual treatment of prisoners with humanity), that "*the King's ministers receive no applications from rebels, unless when they come to implore his Majesty's clemency,*" it cannot be expected, that we should hazard the ex-

posing ourselves again to such insolence.* All I can say further at present is, that in my opinion your enemies do not aim at your destruction, and that if you propose a treaty you will find them reasonable in their demands, provided that on your side they meet with the same good dispositions. But do not dream of dividing us; you will certainly never be able to effect it. With great regard and affection, I am ever, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* The reference here is to a correspondence between the American Commissioners and Lord Stormont, the British ambassador at the Court of France, soon after Dr. Franklin arrived in Paris, as contained in the following letters.

TO LORD STORMONT.

"Paris, 23 February, 1777.

"MY LORD,

"Captain Wickes, of the *Reprisal* frigate, belonging to the United States of America, has now in his hands near one hundred British seamen, prisoners. He desires to know, whether an exchange may be made with him for an equal number of American seamen, now prisoners in England? We take the liberty of proposing this matter to your Lordship, and of requesting your opinion (if there be no impropriety in your giving it), whether such an exchange will probably be agreed to by your court.

"If your people cannot be soon exchanged here, they will be sent to America. We have the honor to be, with great respect, your Lordship's most obedient, humble servants,

"B. FRANKLIN,
"S. DEANE."

TO LORD STORMONT.

"Paris, 2 April, 1777.

"MY LORD,

"We did ourselves the honor of writing some time ago to your Lordship, on the subject of exchanging prisoners. You did not condescend to give us any answer, and therefore we expect none to this. We, however, take the liberty of sending you copies of certain depositions, which we shall transmit to Congress, whereby it will be known to your court, that the United States are not unacquainted with the barbarous treatment their people receive, when they have the misfortune of being your prisoners here in Europe; and that, if your conduct towards us is not altered, it is not unlikely that severe reprisals may be thought justifiable, from the necessity of putting some check to such abominable practices.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 24 February, 1782.

SIR,

You will find enclosed an official despatch,* which has been sent me from the court of Copenhagen, respecting some excesses, that are said to have been committed near the coast of Norway by three American vessels. I make no doubt but you will take the earliest opportunity to transmit it to Congress, that they may decide agreeably to the principles of the laws of nations upon the claim of his Danish Majesty. I have the honor, &c. DE VERGENNES.

"For the sake of humanity, it is to be wished, that men would endeavour to alleviate, as much as possible, the unavoidable miseries attending a state of war. It has been said, that, among the civilized nations of Europe, the ancient horrors of that state are much diminished; but the compelling men by chains, stripes, and famine, to fight against their friends and relations, is a new mode of barbarity which your nation alone had the honor of inventing; and the sending American prisoners of war to Africa and Asia, remote from all probability of exchange, and where they can scarce hope ever to hear from their families, even if the unwholesomeness of the climate does not put a speedy end to their lives, is a manner of treating captives, that you can justify by no other precedent of custom, except that of the black savages of Guinea. We are, your Lordship's most obedient humble servants,

"B. FRANKLIN,
"S. DEANE."

TO LORD STORMONT.

"Paris, 3 April, 1777.

"MY LORD,

"In answer to a letter, which concerns some of the most material interests of humanity, and of the two nations, Great Britain and the United States of America, now at war, we received the enclosed *indecent* paper, as coming from your Lordship, which we return, for your Lordship's more mature consideration. "B. FRANKLIN,
"S. DEANE."

The words of the paper sent by Lord Stormont, and referred to in the above letter, were, "The King's Ambassador receives no applications from rebels, unless they come to implore his Majesty's mercy."

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 296.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Prospect of Peace. — The Ministry favorably disposed.

London, 28 February, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I have not as yet any thing to communicate to you. I have upon many occasions recommended the road to peace in the most earnest way. I am not without hopes. I think I may venture to say, that the arguments which I have stated have made an impression. I have not expected to receive the final answer from Lord North, till after the Parliamentary arrangements of the year are settled. I am just for three or four days in the country, upon a little business, but upon a furlough, as I may say, with the knowledge of Lord North, who, during the budget week, cannot possibly want to see me. I have therefore taken that week for a little private business in the country; and, if Lord North should happen to wish to see me, my brother keeps watch, and is to send express for me. Public report will tell you, that on Friday last there was a division in the House on an American question, of one hundred and ninety-four to one hundred and ninety-three.

I cannot answer for the dispositions of ministers, but in point of justice I ought to say, that I think, as far as I can judge from the conferences which I have had, that I have found good dispositions towards peace. I do not pledge myself, because I may be deceived; however, that is my opinion; and I say thus much, lest my silence should appear suspicious, and create alienation in other parties. I think I have seen good dispositions from the first commencement of my conferences on peace. My brother sends me

word, that Mr. Alexander is to return by the next mail. I therefore write this to send either by him or at least in the same packet. I have had much conversation with him, and he will tell you that I have done my utmost to serve the cause of peace. I will conclude this with a quotation, which I have applied to another person in argument respecting peace. "*Consulere patriæ, parcere afflictis, ferâ cæde abstinere, iræ tempus dare, orbi quietem, sæculo pacem suo, hæc summa virtus, hac cælum petitur viâ.*"

God bless you and prosper our pacific endeavours. I shall probably write again to you soon. Your affectionate D. HARTLEY.

FROM EDMUND BURKE TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Resolutions of the House of Commons.—Mr. Laurens.

London, 28 February, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Your most obliging letter demanded an early answer. It has not received the acknowledgment, which was so justly due to it. But Providence has well supplied my deficiencies; and the delay of the answer has made it much more satisfactory, than at the time of my receipt of your letter I dared to promise myself it could

* This letter was written in answer to one from Dr. Franklin, requesting Mr. Burke to negotiate an exchange of Henry Laurens, when in the Tower, for General Burgoyne. Mr. Laurens was at the time under some mistake in regard to this subject, as he supposed, that Mr. Burke first applied to Dr. Franklin to effect such an exchange, and imagined that Dr. Franklin neglected him; whereas he took the most prompt and efficient means in his power to procure Mr. Laurens's release. See Henry Laurens's letter, dated May 30th, 1782, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. II. p. 463.

be. I congratulate you, as the friend of America; I trust, as not the enemy of England; I am sure, as the friend of mankind; on the resolution of the House of Commons, carried by a majority of nineteen, at two o'clock this morning, in a very full house. It was the declaration of two hundred and thirty-four; I think it was the opinion of the whole. I trust it will lead to a speedy peace between the two branches of the English nation, perhaps to a general peace; and that our happiness may be an introduction to that of the world at large. I most sincerely congratulate you on the event. I wish I could say, that I had accomplished my commission. Difficulties remain. But, as Mr. Laurens is released from his confinement, and has recovered his health tolerably, he may wait, I hope, without a great deal of inconvenience, for the final adjustment of his troublesome business. He is an exceedingly agreeable and honorable man. I am much obliged to you for the honor of his acquaintance. He speaks of you as I do, and is perfectly sensible of your warm and friendly interposition in his favor. I have the honor to be, with the highest possible esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most faithful and obedient humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

P. S. General Burgoyne presents his best compliments to you, with his thanks for your obliging attentions towards him.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Relative to the Complaints of the Danish Court.— American Prizes seized in Danish Ports.

Passy, 3 March, 1782.

Sir,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me, the 24th past, enclosing an official paper on the part of the Danish court, relating to the burning of some English vessels on the coast of Norway by three American ships. I shall not fail to transmit the same immediately to the Congress, who will, I make no doubt, inquire into the facts alleged, and do thereupon what shall appear to be just and right, it being their constant and earnest desire to avoid giving any offence to neutral nations, as will appear by their instructions to all armed vessels, of which I have the honor to present a copy.

In the mean time, as it is natural to expect, that those who exact a rigorous observation of the laws of nations, when their own interest or honor seems affected, should be themselves ready to show an example of their own regard for those laws, where the interest of others is concerned, I cannot but hope the court of Denmark will at length attend to a demand, long since made by me, but hitherto without effect, that they would restore to the United States the value of three vessels, amounting to fifty thousand pounds sterling.* These vessels were fair and good prizes, which had been made by our ships of war, not on the coast of Denmark, but far distant on the high seas,

* Vessels captured by the squadron under Paul Jones. See Dr. Franklin's letter to Count Bernstorff on this subject, Vol. VIII. p. 407.

and were sent into Bergen as into a port truly neutral, but there, contrary to the laws of hospitality, as well as the other laws of nations, they were forcibly wrested out of our hands by the government of that place, and delivered back to our enemies. The Congress have not lost sight of this violence, but constantly expected justice from the equity and wisdom of his Danish Majesty. I am, with the greatest respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Complaints against American Cruisers. — Lafayette. — Emblematical Medal. — British Ministry. — Relations with France. — Robert Morris. — American Prisoners in England. — Deane's Discontents and objectionable Conduct.

Passy, 4 March, 1782.

SIR,

Since I wrote the two short letters, of which I herewith send you copies, I have been honored with yours, dated the 16th of December.*

Enclosed I send two letters from Count de Vergennes, relating to certain complaints from Ostend and Copenhagen against our cruisers. I formerly forwarded a similar complaint from Portugal, to which I have yet received no answer. The ambassador of that kingdom frequently teazes me for it. I hope now, that by your means this kind of affairs will be more immediately attended to; ill blood and mischief may be thereby sometimes prevented.

The Marquis de Lafayette was at his return hither

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* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 258.

received by all ranks with all possible distinction. He daily gains in the general esteem and affection, and promises to be a great man here. He is warmly attached to our cause; we are on the most friendly and confidential footing with each other, and he is really very serviceable to me in my applications for additional assistance.

I have done what I could in recommending Messieurs Duportail and Gouvion, as you desired. I did it with pleasure, as I have much esteem for them.

I will endeavour to procure a sketch of an emblem for the purpose you mention. This puts me in mind of a medal I have had a mind to strike, since the late great event you gave me an account of, representing the United States by the figure of an infant Hercules in his cradle, strangling the two serpents; and France by that of Minerva, sitting by as his nurse, with her spear and helmet, and her robe specked with a few *fleurs de lis*. The extinguishing of two entire armies in one war is what has rarely happened, and it gives a presage of the future force of our growing empire.*

I thank you much for the newspapers you have been so kind as to send me. I send also to you, by every opportunity, packets of the French, Dutch, and English papers. Enclosed is the last *Courier of Europe*, wherein you will find a late curious debate on continuing the war with America, which the minister

* This medal was subsequently executed, under the direction of Dr. Franklin, with some variation in the device. On one side is an infant in his cradle strangling two serpents. Minerva, as the emblem of France, with her spear, helmet, and shield, is engaged in a contest with the British lion. The motto is, NON SINE DIIS ANIMOSUS INFANS; under which are the dates of the two victories at Saratoga and Yorktown, "17 Oct. 1777," and "19 Oct. 1781." On the other side of the medal is a head of Liberty; in the exergue, LIBERTAS AMERICANA, and the date of American independence, "4 Jul. 1776."

carried in the affirmative only by his own vote. It seems the nation is sick of it, but the King is obstinate. *There is a change made of the American Secretary*, and another is talked of in the room of Lord Sandwich. But I suppose we have no reason to desire such changes. If the King will have a war with us, his old servants are as well for us as any he is likely to put in their places. The ministry, you will see, declare, that the war in America is for the future to be only *defensive*. I hope we shall be too prudent to have the least dependence on this declaration. It is only thrown out to lull us; for, depend upon it, the King hates us cordially, and will be content with nothing short of our extirpation.

I shall be glad to receive the account you are preparing of the wanton damages done our possessions. I wish you could also furnish me with one, of the barbarities committed on our people. They may both be of excellent use on certain occasions. I received the duplicate of yours in cipher. Hereafter, I wish you would use that in which those instructions were written, that relate to the future peace. I am accustomed to that, and I think it very good and more convenient in the practice.

The friendly disposition of this court towards us continues. We have sometimes pressed a little too hard, expecting and demanding, perhaps, more than we ought, and have used improper arguments, which may have occasioned a little dissatisfaction, but it has not been lasting. In my opinion, the surest way to obtain liberal aid from others is vigorously to help ourselves. People fear assisting the negligent, the indolent, and the careless, lest the aids they afford should be lost. I know we have done a great deal; but it is said, we are apt to be supine after a little success, and too

backward in furnishing our contingents. This is really a generous nation, fond of glory, and particularly that of protecting the oppressed. Trade is not the admiration of their noblesse, who always govern here. Telling them, their *commerce* will be advantaged by our success, and that it is their *interest* to help us, seems as much as to say, "Help us, and we shall not be obliged to you." Such indiscreet and improper language has been sometimes held here by some of our people, and produced no good effects.

The constant harmony, subsisting between the armies of the two nations in America, is a circumstance, that has afforded me infinite pleasure. It should be carefully cultivated. I hope nothing will happen to disturb it. The French officers, who have returned to France this winter, speak of our people in the handsomest and kindest manner; and there is a strong desire in many of the young noblemen to go over to fight for us; there is no restraining some of them; and several changes among the officers of their army have lately taken place in consequence.

You must be so sensible of the utility of maintaining a perfect good understanding with the Chevalier de la Luzerne, that I need say nothing on that head. The affairs of a distant people in any court of Europe will always be much affected by the representations of the minister of that court residing among them.

We have here great quantities of supplies, of all kinds, ready to be sent over, and which would have been on their way before this time, if the unlucky loss of the transports, that were under M. de Guichen, and other demands for more ships, had not created a difficulty to find freight for them. I hope however, that you will receive them with the next convoy.

The accounts we have of the economy introduced

by Mr. Morris begin to be of service to us here, and will by degrees obviate the inconvenience, that an opinion of our disorders and mismanagements had occasioned. I inform him by this conveyance of the money aids we shall have this year. The sum is not so great as we could wish; and we must so much the more exert ourselves. A small increase of industry in every American, male and female, with a small diminution of luxury, would produce a sum far superior to all we can hope to beg or borrow from all our friends in Europe.

There are now near a thousand of our brave fellows prisoners in England, many of whom have patiently endured the hardships of that confinement several years, resisting every temptation to serve our enemies. Will not your late great advantages put it in your power to do something for their relief? The slender supply I have been able to afford, of a shilling a week to each, for their greater comfort during the winter, amounts weekly to fifty pounds sterling. An exchange would make so many of our countrymen happy, add to our strength, and diminish our expense. But our privateers, who cruise in Europe, will not be at the trouble of bringing in their prisoners, and I have none to exchange for them.

Generals Cornwallis and Arnold are both arrived in England. It is reported, that the former, in all his conversations, discourages the prosecution of the war in America; if so, he will of course be out of favor. We hear much of audiences given to the latter, and of his being present at councils.

You desire to know, whether any intercepted letters of Mr. Deane have been published in Europe? I have seen but one in the English papers, that to Mr. Wadsworth, and none in any of the French and Dutch pa-

pers, but some may have been printed that have not fallen in my way. There is no doubt of their being all genuine. His conversation, since his return from America, has, as I have been informed, gone gradually more and more into that style, and at length come to an open vindication of Arnold's conduct; and, within these few days, he has sent me a letter of twenty full pages, recapitulating those letters, and threatening to write and publish an account of the treatment he has received from Congress, &c. He resides at Ghent, is distressed both in mind and circumstances, raves and writes abundance, and I imagine it will end in his going over to join his friend Arnold in England. I had an exceeding good opinion of him when he acted with me, and I believe he was then sincere and hearty in our cause. But he is changed, and his character ruined in his own country and in this, so that I see no other but England to which he can now retire. He says, that we owe him about twelve thousand pounds sterling; and his great complaint is, that we do not settle his accounts and pay him. Mr. Johnston having declined the service, I proposed engaging Mr. Searle to undertake it; but Mr. Deane objected to him, as being his enemy. In my opinion he was, for that reason, even fitter for the service of Mr. Deane; since accounts are of a mathematical nature, and cannot be changed by an enemy, while that enemy's testimony, that he had found them well supported by authentic vouchers, would have weighed more than the same testimony from a friend.*

With regard to negotiations for a peace, I see but little probability of their being entered upon seriously this year, unless the English minister has failed in

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. I. p. 217.

raising his funds, which it is said he has secured; so that we must provide for another campaign, in which I hope God will continue to favor us, and humble our cruel and haughty enemies; a circumstance which, whatever Mr. Deane may say to the contrary, will give pleasure to all Europe.

This year opens well, by the reduction of Port Mahon, and the garrison prisoners of war, and we are not without hopes, that Gibraltar may soon follow. A few more signal successes in America will do much towards reducing our enemies to reason. Your expressions of good opinion with regard to me, and wishes of my continuance in this employment, are very obliging. As long as the Congress think I can be useful to our affairs, it is my duty to obey their orders; but I should be happy to see them better executed by another, and myself at liberty, enjoying, before I quit the stage of life, some small degree of leisure and tranquillity. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Address of the House of Commons to the King against continuing the War in America.

Passy, 9 March, 1782.

SIR,

I have just received the honor of yours dated January the 7th. Your communications of the sentiments of Congress, with regard to many points that may come under consideration in a treaty of peace, give me great pleasure, and the more, as they agree so perfectly with my own opinions, and furnish me with additional arguments in their support. I shall be more

particular on this subject in my next; for, having notice from Captain Barry last night, that he will not go to Brest, as I expected, to take in some of our goods, but will sail immediately on the return of the post, which sets out to-day, I am obliged to be short.

You will see in the enclosed newspapers the full debate in the House of Commons, on the subject of declining the war with North America. By private advices I learn, that the whole opposition, now become the majority, went up in a body with the address to the King, who answered, that he would pay a due regard to the advice of his faithful Commons, and employ his forces with more vigor against the ancient enemies of the nation, or to that purpose; and that orders were immediately given for taking up a great number of large transports, among which are many old India ships, whence it is conjectured, that they intend some great effort in the West Indies, and perhaps mean to carry off their troops and stores from New York and Charleston. I hope, however, that we shall not, in expectation of this, relax in our preparations for the approaching campaign. I will procure the books you write for, and send them as soon as possible.

Present my duty to the Congress, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 11 March, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Digges, who will deliver this to you, informs me, that, having been applied to for the purpose of communicating with Mr. Adams, on the subject of his commission for treating of peace, he is now setting out for

Amsterdam, and that he intends afterwards to go to Paris to wait upon you. I understand the occasion to have arisen, by some mention having been made in Parliament, by General Conway, of persons not far off having authority to treat of peace, which was supposed to allude to Mr. Adams, and some friends of his in London. The ministry were therefore induced to make some inquiries themselves. This is what I am informed of the matter.

When the proposal was made to Mr. Digges, he consulted me, I believe from motives of caution, that he might know what ground he had to stand upon; but not in the least apprized, that I had been, in any degree, in course of corresponding with you on the subject of negotiation. As I had informed the ministry from you, that other persons besides yourself were invested with powers of treating, I have nothing to say against their consulting the several respective parties. That is their own concern. I shall at all times content myself with observing the duties of my own conduct, attending to all circumstances with circumspection, and then leaving the conduct of others to their own reasons. I presume the ministry have only done what others would have done in their situation, to procure the most ample information, that the case will admit. I rest contented to act in my own sphere; and, if my exertions can be applied to any public good, I shall always be ready to take my part with sincerity and zeal. I am, my dear friend, your ever affectionate

D. Hartley.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

British Ministry.

London, 12 March, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Enclosed with this I transmit to you the public Parliamentary proceedings respecting the American war.* If you will compare these proceedings with some others in several of the counties of this kingdom about two years ago, you will at once see the reason why many persons, who from principles of general and enlarged philanthropy do most certainly wish universal peace to mankind, yet seem restrained in their mode of endeavouring to obtain that object. We must accommodate our endeavours to practicabilities, in the strong hope, that, if the work of peace was once begun, it would soon become general. Parliament having declared their sentiments by their public proceedings, a general bill will soon pass to enable administration to treat with America, and to conclude.

As to the sincerity of the ministry, that will be judged of by their conduct in any treaty. The first object is to procure a meeting of qualified and authorized persons. You have told me, that four persons are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace. Are we to understand, that each separately has power to conclude, or in what manner? The four persons whom you have mentioned are in four different parts of the world, viz. three of them in hostile States, and the fourth under circumstances very peculiar for a negotiator. When I told Mr. Laurens, that his name was

* See the proceedings of Parliament on General Conway's "Motion for putting an end to offensive war with America"; February 27th, 1782. — DEBRETT's *Parliamentary Register*, Vol. VI. pp. 310–341.

in the commission, I found him entirely ignorant of every circumstance relating to it. I understand, that the ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negotiation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult time, and place, and manner, and persons, on each side. The negotiation itself will speak the rest.

I have been informed, that some gentlemen in this country (not in administration) have lately entered into a correspondence with Mr. Adams relating to his commission of treating for peace, and that, their previous inquiries having been spoken of in public, the ministry have been induced to make some inquiry themselves from Mr. Adams on that subject. In whatever way a fair treaty may be opened, by whomsoever or with whomsoever, I shall heartily wish good success to it for the common good and peace of mankind. I know these to be your sentiments, and I am confident that they will ever remain so, and hope that you will believe the same of me. I am ever your most affectionate

D. HARTLEY.

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, 16 March, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your several favors of January 30th, February 11th, and March 1st, and propose to write fully to you by the next post. In the mean time this line may serve to acquaint you, that I paid duly all your former bills drawn in favor of M. Cabarrus, and that, having obtained a promise of six millions for this year, to be paid me quarterly, I now see, that I shall be able to pay your drafts for discharging the sums you may be obliged to borrow for paying those upon

you; in which, however, I wish you to give me as much time as you can, dividing them so that they may not come upon me at once. Interest should be allowed your friends who advance for you. Please to send me a complete list of all the bills you have accepted, their numbers and dates, marking which are paid, and what are still to pay.

I congratulate you upon the change of sentiments in the British nation. It has been intimated to me from thence, that they are willing to make a separate peace with us, exclusive of France, Spain, and Holland, which, so far as relates to France, is impossible; and I believe they will be content that we leave them the other two; but Holland is stepping towards us, and I am not without hopes of a second loan there. And, since Spain does not think our friendship worth cultivating, I wish you would inform me of the whole sum we owe her, that we may think of some means of paying it off speedily. With sincerest regard, I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Change of Ministry. — Peace desired in England.

London, 21 March, 1782.

My dear Friend,

You will have heard before this can reach you, that Lord North declared yesterday in the House of Commons, that his Majesty intended to change his ministers. The House is adjourned for a few days to give time for the formation of a new ministry. Upon this occasion, therefore, I must apply to you, to know whether you would wish me to transfer the late negotiation to the successors of the late ministry; in these

terms, (*vide* yours to me of January 15th, 1782,) viz. "that you are empowered by a special commission to treat of peace, whenever a negotiation for that purpose shall be opened; that it must be always understood, that it is to be in conjunction with your allies, conformable to the solemn treaties made with them; that the formal acknowledgment of the independence of America is not made necessary." And may I add, that upon these terms you are disposed to enter into a negotiation? It is not known who will succeed the late ministry; but, from the circumstances which preceded its dissolution, we are to hope that they will be disposed to enter into a negotiation of peace upon fair and honorable terms. I have no doubt, that there were some persons in the late ministry of that disposition.

I told you in my last letters to you, of the 11th and 12th instant, that I had received information, whilst I was in the course of correspondence with the ministry myself, on the subject of peace, that some part of the ministry were transmitting some communications or inquiries upon that subject to Mr. Adams, unknown to me. I had informed the ministry, from you, of the names of the four persons empowered to treat. I saw the minister upon the occasion. (I should now call him the late minister.) I took the liberty of giving him my opinion upon the matter itself. So far as it related personally to me, I expressed myself fully to him, that there was no occasion that such a step should have been taken unknown to me, for that I was very free to confess, that, if they thought my partiality towards peace was so strong, that they could drive a better bargain through another channel, I could not have any right of exclusion upon them.

I relate this to you, because I would wish to have

you make a corresponding application to your own case. If you should think, *that my strong desire for peace*, although *most laudable and virtuous in itself, should mislead me*, and that my being, as you may suppose, misled, may be of any prejudice to the cause committed to your trust, I desire by no means to embarrass your free conduct by any considerations of private or personal regard to myself. Having said thus much, I will now add, that I am not unambitious of the office of a peacemaker; that I flatter myself the very page which I am now writing will bear full testimony, from both sides, of the impartiality of my conduct. And I will add once more, what I have often said and repeated to each side, viz. that no fallacy or deception, knowing, or suspecting it to be such, shall ever pass through my hands.

Believe me, I sympathize most cordially and sincerely with you in every anxiety of yours for peace. I hope things are tending, although not without rubs, yet in the main, to that end soon; as soon as the course of human life may be expected to operate on the great scale and course of national events, or rather in the creation and establishment of a new world. I am sometimes tempted to think myself in patient expectation the elder sage of the two; I say the elder, not the better. Yours, &c.

D. Hartley.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Interview with Digges. — Opposes the Plan of a Truce. — Affairs in Holland.

The Hague, 26 March, 1782.

Sir,

One day last week I received at Amsterdam a card from Mr. Digges, enclosing two letters to me from David Hartley. The card desired to see me upon business of importance; and the letters from Mr. Hartley contained an assurance, that to his knowledge the bearer came from the highest authority. I answered the card, that, in the present situation of affairs here and elsewhere, it was impossible for me to see any one from England without witness; but, if he were willing to see me in the presence of Mr. Thaxter, my secretary, and that I should communicate whatever he should say to me to Dr. Franklin and the Count de Vergennes, I should wait for him at home at ten o'clock; but that I had rather he should go to Paris without seeing me, and communicate what he had to say to Dr. Franklin, whose situation enabled him to consult the court without any loss of time. At ten, however, he came, and told me a long story about consultations with Mr. Penn, Mr. Hartley, Lord Beauchamp, and at last Lord North, by whom he was finally sent, to inquire of me, if I, or any other, had authority to treat with Great Britain of a truce. I answered, that "I came to Europe with full powers to make peace; that those powers had been announced to the public upon my arrival, and continued in force until last summer, when Congress sent a new commission, containing the same powers to four persons, whom I named; that, if the King of England were

my father, and I the heir apparent to his throne, I could not advise him ever to think of a truce, because it would be but a real war under a simulated appearance of tranquillity, and would end in another open and bloody war, without doing any real good to any of the parties."

He said, that "the ministry would send some person of consequence over, perhaps General Conway, but they were apprehensive that he would be ill treated or exposed." I said, "that, if they resolved upon such a measure, I had rather they would send immediately to Dr. Franklin, because of his situation near the French court. But there was no doubt, if they sent any respectable personage, properly authorized, who should come to treat honorably, he would be treated with great respect; but that, if he came to me, I could give him no opinion upon any thing without consulting my colleagues, and should reserve a right of communicating every thing to them, and to our allies."

He then said, that "his mission was finished; that the fact to be ascertained was simply, that there was a commission in Europe to treat and conclude; but that there was not one person in Great Britain, who could affirm or prove, that there was such a commission, although it had been announced in the gazettes."

I desired him, and he promised me, not to mention Mr. Laurens to the ministry without his consent, (and without informing him, that it was impossible he should say any thing in the business, because he knew nothing of our instructions,) because, although it was possible that his being in such a commission might induce them to release him, yet it was also possible it might render them more difficult concerning his exchange.

The picture he gives of the situation of things in England is gloomy enough for them. The distresses of the people, and the distractions in administration and Parliament, are such as may produce any effect almost, that can be imagined.

The only use of all this, I think, is to strike the decisive strokes at New York and Charleston. There is no position so advantageous for negotiation, as when we have all an enemy's army prisoners. I must beg the favor of you, Sir, to send me, by one of the Count de Vergennes' couriers to the Duc de la Vauguyon, a copy in letters of your peace instructions. I have not been able to decipher one quarter part of mine. Some mistake has certainly been made.

Ten or eleven cities in Holland have declared themselves in favor of American independence; and it is expected that to-day or to-morrow, this province will take the decisive resolution of admitting me to my audience. Perhaps some of the other provinces may delay it for three or four weeks. But the Prince has declared, that he has no hopes of resisting the torrent, and, *therefore*, that he shall not attempt it.* The Duc de la Vauguyon has acted a very friendly and honorable part in this business, without, however, doing any ministerial act in it. With great respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

* Mr. Adams was admitted to an audience of the Prince of Orange on the 22d of April, when he presented his letter of credence from Congress, and was recognised by the Prince as minister plenipotentiary from the United States. The next day the French ambassador made an entertainment, at which all the foreign ministers were present, and Mr. Adams was formally introduced to them. See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. VI. pp. 339, 342.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Policy of the British Ministry to separate France and the United States.

Passy, 30 March, 1782.

SIR,

In mine of the 9th instant, I acknowledged the receipt of yours of January 7th, and I have not since received any of later date. The newspapers, which I send you by this conveyance, will acquaint you with what has, since my last, passed in Parliament. You will there see a copy of the bill, brought in by the attorney-general, for empowering the King to make peace with the colonies. They still seem to flatter themselves with the idea of dividing us; and, rather than name the Congress, they empower him generally to treat with any *body or bodies of men, or any person or persons, &c.* They are here likewise endeavouring to get us to treat separately from France, at the same time they are tempting France to treat separately from us, equally without the least chance of success. I have been drawn into a correspondence on this subject, which you shall have with my next.

I send you a letter of Mr. Adams's, just received, which shows also that they are weary of the war, and would get out of it if they knew how. They had not then received the certain news of the loss of St. Christopher's, which will probably render them still more disposed to peace. I see that a bill is also passing through the House of Commons for the exchange of American prisoners, the purport of which I do not yet know.

In my last, I promised to be more particular with respect to the points you mentioned, as proper to be

insisted on in the treaty of peace. My ideas on those points are, I assure you, full as strong as yours. I did intend to give you my reasons for some addition, and, if the treaty were to be held on your side of the water, I would do it; otherwise, it seems on second thoughts to be unnecessary, and, if my letter should be intercepted, may be inconvenient. Be assured, I shall not willingly give up any important right or interest of our country, and, unless this campaign should afford our enemies some considerable advantage, I hope more may be obtained than is yet expected.

I have purchased for you all the books you desired, except four, which we have sent for to England. I shall request our excellent friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, to take them under his care, and I hope they will get safe to hand. The others shall follow by the first opportunity after I receive them.

Our affairs go on, generally, well in Europe. Holland has been slow, Spain slower; but time will, I hope, smooth away all difficulties. Let us keep up, not only our courage, but our vigilance, and not be laid asleep by the pretended half peace the English make with us without asking our consent. We cannot be safe while they keep armies in our country. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Digges's Mission. — Delays of Holland and Spain.

Passy, 31 March, 1782.

SIR,

I received yours of the 10th instant, and am of opinion with you, that the English will evacuate New

York and Charleston; as the troops there, after the late resolutions of Parliament, must be useless, and are necessary to defend their remaining islands, where they have not at present more than three thousand men. The prudence of this operation is so obvious, that I think they can hardly miss it; otherwise, I own, that, considering their conduct for several years past, it is not reasoning consequentially to conclude they will do a thing, because the doing it is required by common sense.

Yours of the 26th is just come to hand. I thank you for the communication of Digges's message. He has also sent me a long letter,* with two from Mr. Hartley. I shall see M. de Vergennes to-morrow, and will acquaint you with every thing material that passes on the subject. But the ministry, by whom Digges pretends to be sent, being changed, we shall, by waiting a little, see what tone will be taken by their successors. You shall have a copy of the instructions by the next courier. I congratulate you cordially on the progress you have made among those slow people. Slow however as they are, Mr. Jay finds his† much slower. By an American, who goes in about ten days to Holland, I shall send you a packet of correspondence with Mr. Hartley, though it amounts to little.

With great esteem, I have the honor to be your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

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* Mr. Digges said in his letter, that he was sent at the instance of the British ministry to ascertain "whether any person or persons in Europe were commissioned by Congress to treat for peace, whether they were now willing to avail themselves of such commission, and of the sincere disposition of the ministry to treat, and whether they would receive an appointed commissioner to speak for a truce, and mention the place for a meeting." See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 320.

† The Spaniards.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 31 March, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received your favors of March the 11th and 12th, forwarded to me by Mr. Digges, and another of the 21st per post. I congratulate you on the returning good disposition of your nation towards America, which appears in the resolutions of Parliament, that you have sent me; and I hope the change of your ministry will be attended with salutary effects. I continue in the same sentiments expressed in my former letters; but, as I am but one of five in the commission, and have no knowledge of the sentiments of the others, what has passed between us is to be considered merely as private conversation. The five persons are Messrs. Adams, Jay, Laurens, Jefferson, and myself; and, in case of the death or absence of any, the remainder have power to act or conclude. I have not written to Mr. Laurens, having constantly expected him here, but shall write to him next post; when I shall also write more fully to you, having now only time to add, that I am ever, with great esteem and affection, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Introducing Count de Ségur. — England.

Passy, 2 April, 1782.

SIR,

I received duly the honor of your letter, accompanying the capitulation of General Cornwallis. All the world agree, that no expedition was ever better

planned or better executed; it has made a great addition to the military reputation you had already acquired, and brightens the glory that surrounds your name, and that must accompany it to our latest posterity. No news could possibly make me more happy. The infant Hercules has now strangled the two serpents* that attacked him in his cradle, and I trust his future history will be answerable.

This will be presented to you by the Count de Ségur.† He is son of the Marquis de Ségur, minister of war, and our very good friend; but I need not claim your regards to the young gentleman on that score; his amiable personal qualities, his very sensible conversation, and his zeal for the cause of liberty, will obtain and secure your esteem, and be better recommendation than any I can give him.

The English seem not to know either how to continue the war, or to make peace with us. Instead of entering into a regular treaty for putting an end to a contest they are tired of, they have voted in Parliament, that the recovery of America by force is impracticable, that an offensive war against us ought not to be continued, and that whoever advises it shall be deemed an enemy to his country.

Thus the garrisons of New York and Charleston, if continued there, must sit still, being only allowed to defend themselves. The ministry, not understanding or approving this making of peace by halves, have quitted their places; but we have no certain account here who is to succeed them, so that the measures likely to be taken are yet uncertain; probably we shall

* Alluding to the surrender of the two British armies under Burgoyne and Cornwallis, October 17th, 1777, and October 19th, 1781.

† Afterwards for several years ambassador at the Court of St. Petersburg. See Sparks's *Life of Ledyard*, 1st ed., pp. 191, 283.

know something of them before the Marquis de Lafayette takes his departure. There are grounds for good hopes, however; but I think we should not therefore relax in our preparations for a vigorous campaign, as that nation is subject to sudden fluctuations; and, though somewhat humiliated at present, a little success in the West Indies may dissipate their present fears, recall their natural insolence, and occasion the interruption of negotiation, and a continuance of the war. We have great stores purchased here for the use of your army, which will be sent as soon as transports can be procured for them to go under good convoy.

My best wishes always have and always will attend you, being with the greatest and most sincere esteem and respect, Sir, your Excellency's most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

American Commissioners are ready to treat. — Reconciliation more than a Peace. — Means of effecting it.

Passy, 5 April, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote a few lines to you the 31st past, and promised to write more fully. On perusing again your letters of the 11th, 12th, and 21st, I do not find any notice taken of one from me, dated February the 16th. I therefore now send you a copy made from it in the press. The uncertainty of free transmission discourages a free communication of sentiments on these important affairs; but the inutility of discussion between persons, one of whom is not authorized but in conjunction with others, and the other not authorized at

all, as well as the obvious inconveniences that may attend such previous handling of points, that are to be considered when we come to treat regularly, is with me a still more effectual discouragement, and determines me to waive that part of the correspondence.

As to Digges, I have no confidence in him, nor in any thing he says, or may say, of his being sent by ministers. Nor will I have any communication with him, except in receiving and considering the justification of himself, which he pretends he shall be able and intends to make, for his excessive drafts on me, on account of the relief I have ordered to the prisoners, and his embezzlement of the money.

You justly observe, in yours of the 12th, that the first object is, to procure a "meeting of qualified and authorized persons," and that you understand the ministry will be ready to proceed towards opening a negotiation as soon as the bill shall pass, and therefore it is necessary to consult time and place, and manner and persons, on each side. This you wrote while the old ministry existed. If the new have the same intentions, and desire a general peace, they may easily discharge Mr. Laurens from those engagements, which make his acting in the commission improper; and, except Mr. Jefferson, who remains in America, and is not expected here, we, the Commissioners of Congress, can easily be got together ready to meet yours, at such place as shall be agreed to by the powers at war, in order to form the treaty. God grant, that there may be wisdom enough assembled to make, if possible, a peace that shall be perpetual, and that the idea of any nations being natural enemies to each other may be abolished, for the honor of human nature.

With regard to those, who may be commissioned from your government, whatever personal preferences

I may conceive in my own mind, it cannot become me to express them. I only wish for wise and honest men. With such, a peace may be speedily concluded. With contentious wranglers, the negotiation may be drawn into length, and finally frustrated.

I am pleased to see, in the votes and Parliamentary speeches, and in your public papers, that, in mentioning America, the word *reconciliation* is often used. It certainly means more than a mere peace. It is a sweet expression. Revolve in your mind, my dear friend, the means of bringing about this *reconciliation*. When you consider the injustice of your war with us, and the barbarous manner in which it has been carried on, the many suffering families among us from your burning of towns, scalping by savages, &c. &c., will it not appear to you, that though a cessation of the war may be a peace, it may not be a reconciliation? Will not some voluntary acts of justice, and even of kindness on your part, have excellent effects towards producing such a *reconciliation*? Can you not find means of repairing in some degree those injuries? You have in England and Ireland twelve hundred of our people prisoners, who have for years bravely suffered all the hardships of that confinement, rather than enter into your service, to fight against their country. Methinks you ought to glory in descendants of such virtue. What if you were to begin your measures of *reconciliation* by setting them at liberty? I know it would procure for you the liberty of an equal number of your people, even without a previous stipulation; and the confidence in our equity, with the apparent good will in the action, would give very good impressions of your change of disposition towards us. Perhaps you have no knowledge of the opinions lately conceived of your King and country, in America; the enclosed copy of

a letter will make you a little acquainted with them, and convince you how impossible must be every project of bringing us again under the dominion of such a sovereign. With great esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE CHEVALIER DELFINO TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, 6 April, 1782.

The Academy of Sciences and Arts in Padua desire to add the name of Franklin to those, with which the list of its members is already honored. The Chevalier Delfino, Venetian Ambassador, will be greatly flattered by being allowed to communicate this satisfaction to a rising institution, which enjoys the special protection of the government.

He joins his own solicitation to that of the Academicians, and has the honor to assure Dr. Franklin of his most sincere consideration.*

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* The Society sent to him a diploma, of which the following is a translation.

"Padua, 20 December, 1781.

"Zeal in promoting the increase of all kinds of useful knowledge naturally unites in a general society all those who consecrate their talents to so noble a purpose; and the particular act of electing them into a learned assembly is properly but an acknowledgment of the original titles of their relationship.

"Among these, Dr. Franklin having distinguished himself eminently, and rendered himself equally memorable in natural philosophy and in politics, the Academy of Sciences, Letters, and Arts of Padua conceive it to be honoring themselves, when they number him among the twenty-four illustrious strangers, who, by their constitution, are to be associated into their body.

"The Society will be fully recompensed, if its labors in coöperating for the augmentation of science shall be such as that the eminent persons, whom it elects, may not regard among the smallest of literary

TO THE CHEVALIER DE CHASTELLUX.*

Change of Ministry in England. — Campaign in America. — Count de Ségur.

Passy, 6 April, 1782.

Dear Sir,

It gave me great pleasure to hear by the officers returned last winter from your army, that you continued in good health. You will see by the public papers that the English begin to be weary of the war, and they have reason, having suffered many losses, having four nations of enemies on their hands, few men to spare, little money left, and very bad heads. The latter they have lately changed. As yet we know not what measures their new ministry will take. People generally think they will be employed by the King to extricate him from his present difficulties, by obtaining a peace, and that then he will kick them out again; they being all men that he abominates, and who have been forced upon him by the Parliament.

The Commons have already made a sort of half peace with us Americans, by forbidding their troops on the Continent to act offensively; and by a new law they have empowered the King to complete it. As yet I hear nothing of the terms they mean to propose; indeed, they have had hardly time to form them. I know they wish to detach us from France; but that is impossible.

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honors, that which, on the part of the Society, is only a solemn act of adherence to its own judgment, and attention to the voice of fame.

"Leopoldo M. M. Caldani, *President.*
"Matteo Strannoia, *Sec. for the Sciences.*
"Melchior Cesarotti, *Sec. for Literature.*"

* At this time with the French army in America.

I congratulate you on the success of your last glorious campaign. Establishing the liberties of America will not only make that people happy, but will have some effect in diminishing the misery of those, who in other parts of the world groan under despotism, by rendering it more circumspect, and inducing it to govern with a lighter hand. A philosopher, endowed with those strong sentiments of humanity, that are manifested in your excellent writings,* must enjoy great satisfaction in having contributed so extensively by his sword, as well as by his pen, to the *félicité publique.*

M. le Comte de Ségur has desired of me a line of recommendation to you. I consider his request rather as a compliment to me, than as asking what may be of use to him; since I find that all who know him here esteem and love him, and he is certainly not unknown to you.

Dare I confess to you, that I am your rival with Madame G——? I need not tell you, that I am not a dangerous one. I perceive that she loves you very much; and so does, dear Sir, yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Introducing the Prince de Broglie.

Passy, 8 April, 1782.

SIR,

I did myself the honor of writing to you a few days since by the Count de Ségur. This line is chiefly to present the Prince de Broglie to your Excellency, who goes over to join the army of M. de Rochambeau. He bears an excellent character here, is a hearty friend to

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* His principal work was entitled *De la Félicité Publique.*

our cause, and I am persuaded you will have a pleasure in his conversation. I take leave, therefore, to recommend him to those civilities, which you are always happy in showing to strangers of merit and distinction.

I have heretofore congratulated your Excellency on your victories over our enemy's generals; I can now do the same on your having overthrown their politicians. Your late successes have so strengthened the hands of opposition in Parliament, that they are become the majority, and have compelled the King to dismiss all his old ministers and their adherents. The unclean spirits he was possessed with are now cast out of him; but it is imagined, that, as soon as he has obtained a peace, they will return with others worse than themselves, *and the last state of that man*, as the Scripture says, *shall be worse than the first.*

As soon as we can learn any thing certain of the projects of the new ministry, I shall take the first opportunity of communicating them. With the greatest esteem and respect, I am, Sir, your Excellency's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Change of Ministry. — Recommends the Prince de Broglie.

Passy, 8 April, 1782.

SIR,

Since my last, an extraordinary revolution has taken place in the court of England. All the old ministers are out, and the chiefs of the opposition are in their places. The newspapers that I send will give you the names as correctly as we yet know them. Our last

advices mention their kissing hands, but they had yet done nothing in their respective offices, by which one might judge of their projected measures; as whether they will ask a peace, of which they have great need, the nation having of late suffered many losses, men grown extremely scarce, and Lord North's new taxes, proposed as funds for the loan, meeting with great opposition; or whether they will strive to find new resources, and obtain allies, to enable them to please the King and nation by some vigorous exertions against France, Spain, and Holland.

With regard to America, having, while in opposition, carried the vote for making no longer an offensive war with us, they seem to have tied their own hands from acting against us. Their predecessors had been tampering with this court for a separate peace. The King's answer gave me great pleasure. It will be sent to M. de la Luzerne, and by him communicated to Congress. None of their attempts to divide us meet with the least encouragement, and I imagine the present set will try other measures.

My letters from Holland give pleasing accounts of the rapid progress our affairs are making in that country. The packet from M. Dumas, which I forward with this, will give you the particulars. The Prince de Broglie will do me the favor of delivering this to you. He goes over to join the French army with the more pleasure, as it is employed in the cause of liberty, a cause he loves, and in establishing the interests of America, a country for which he has much regard and affection. I recommend him earnestly to the civilities and services it may be in your power to render him, and I request you would introduce him to the President of Congress, and to the principal members, civil and military.

Our excellent friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, will sail in about three weeks. By that time we may have more interesting intelligence from England, and I shall write you fully. With great esteem, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Change of Ministry. — Holland. — Prince de Broglie.

Passy, 8 April, 1782.

Sir,

The bills, accepted by Mr. Jay, and afterwards protested for nonpayment, are come and coming back to France and Holland, and I have ordered them to be taken up and discharged by our banker; I hope none will be returned to America.

There is a convoy just going, and another, it is said, will follow in about three weeks; by these two, I hope the best part, if not all our goods will be got out.

Since my last of the 30th past, we hear, that the old ministry are all out to a man, and that the new ministry have kissed hands, and were about to enter upon their respective functions; as yet we know nothing of their projects. They are all of them men, who have in Parliament declared strongly against the American war, as unjust. Their predecessors *made various separate and private essays to dispose us to quit France, and France to forsake us*, but met with no encouragement. Before our friend the Marquis sails, we shall probably receive some interesting information, which I will take care to forward to you.

Our public affairs go on swimmingly in Holland, and a treaty will probably soon be entered into between the two republics. I wish I could give you as good

news of our private business; Mr. Barclay is still detained by it, and I am deprived of his assistance here.

This will be delivered to you by M. le Prince de Broglie, who goes over to join the army of M. de Rochambeau. He bears an excellent character, is fond of America and its glorious cause, and will have great satisfaction in fighting for the establishment of liberty. I recommend him earnestly to those civilities, which I know you have a pleasure in showing to strangers of merit and distinction.

Your two fine boys continue well. They dine with me every Sunday, being at school in my neighbourhood. I am, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Passy, 12 April, 1782.

Sir,

I should sooner have paid my respects to you by letter, if I had not till lately expected you here, as I understood it to be your intention. Your enlargement gave me great pleasure, and I hope, that the terms exacted by the late ministry will now be relaxed, especially when they are informed, that you are one of the Commissioners appointed to treat of peace. Herewith I send you a copy of the commission; the purport of which you can communicate to the ministers, if you find it proper. If they are disposed to make peace with us and our allies at the same time, I will, on notice from you, send to Mr. Jay, to prepare for meeting at such time and place as shall be agreed on.

As to our treating separately, and quitting our present alliance, which the late ministry seemed to desire, it is impossible. Our treaties and our instructions, as well as the honor and interest of our country, forbid

it. I will communicate those instructions to you, as soon as I have the pleasure of seeing you. If you have occasion for money, please to acquaint me with the sum you desire, and I will endeavour to supply you. With very great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM M. DE RAYNEVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Proposal of the British Ministry for a Separate Treaty with France.

Translation.

Versailles, 12 April, 1782.

SIR,

I have laid before the Count de Vergennes, the different letters, which Mr. Hartley had written to you, as well as your proposed reply. The minister has given his entire approbation to the manner in which you have expressed yourself. I subjoin a postscript concerning Mr. Forth;* the Count de Vergennes, who has given it a perusal, finds that you may without impropriety transmit it to your correspondent. I have the honor to be, Sir, with the most sincere attachment, &c.

DE RAYNEVAL.†

P. S. Since my letter was written, Sir, I have considered anew the different overtures which it embraces. In your opinion, the late English minister sincerely desired a reconciliation with us, and proposed with this view a separate peace. At the time you were transmitting this wish of Lord North to me, this ex-minister

* Mr. Forth was a secret agent, sent over to France by the British ministry, to propose a separate treaty with the French court.

† M. de Rayneval was Secretary to the King's Council.

employed an emissary here to sound the minister of France on the pacific disposition of his court, and offer very advantageous propositions. You will be able to judge from this, Sir, of the opinion which I ought to have of the intention of Lord North and his colleagues. To convince you of the truth of the suggestions which I communicate, I will confide to you, that the emissary was a Mr. Forth, and that he was charged to reply to the English minister, "*that the King of France is as desirous of peace as the King of England; and that he would accede to it as soon as he could with dignity and safety; but it is a matter of the last importance for His Most Christian Majesty to know, whether the court of London is disposed to treat on equal terms with the allies of France.*" Mr. Forth has set out for London with this answer; but it is probable, he will not arrive till after the ministers, who sent him, have retired from office.

You may, Sir, without the least hesitation, make use of these details, if you judge it expedient. They will make known to the minister in place the principles of the court of France; and they will convince him, I hope, that the project of disuniting us will be as illusory, as it would prove injurious to us. As to the reply, sent by Mr. Forth, I cannot foresee (if the new ministers are instructed on this point) in what manner they will think they ought to consider it; if they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe, they need not be embarrassed; France has opened a way in which they can, in my opinion, act without wounding the dignity of their master; if they do not adopt it, they flatter themselves, without doubt, that the chances of war will procure for England the success, which heretofore has been denied her; it will be for Providence to crown or frustrate their hopes.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Holland. — Spain. — Portugal.

Passy, 12 April, 1782.

SIR,

Being at court on Tuesday, I learned from the Dutch minister, that the new English ministry have offered, through the ministers of Russia, a cessation of arms to Holland, and a renewal of the treaty of 1674. M. de Berkenrode seemed to be of the opinion, that the offer was intended to gain time, to obstruct the concert of operations with France for the ensuing campaign, and to prevent the conclusion of a treaty with America. It is apprehended, that it may have some effect in strengthening the hands of the English party in that country, and retard affairs a little; but it is hoped, that the proposal will not be finally agreed to. It would indeed render the Dutch ridiculous. A, having a cane in his hand, meets his neighbour B, who happens to have none, takes the advantage, and gives him a sound drubbing. B, having found a stick, and coming to return the blows he received, A says, "My old friend, why should we quarrel? We are neighbours; let us be good ones, and live peaceably by each other, as we used to do." If B is so easily satisfied, and lays aside his stick, the rest of the neighbours, as well as A, will laugh at him. This is the light in which I stated it. Enclosed I send you a copy of the proposition.

I see by the newspapers, that the Spaniards, having taken a little post called St. Joseph, pretend to have made a conquest of the Illinois country. In what light does this proceeding appear to Congress? While they decline our offered friendship, are they to be suffered to encroach on our bounds, and shut us up within the

Appalachian mountains? I begin to fear they have some such project.

Having seen in the English prints an article from Lisbon, that two American ships under French colors, being arrived in that port, were seized by the government, I asked the Portuguese ambassador if it was true. He said, he had no advice of it, as he certainly should have had, if such a thing had happened; he therefore did not give the least credit to it, and said, we might make ourselves perfectly easy; no such treatment would in his opinion be offered us in their ports; and he further observed, on the falsehood of English newspapers, their having lately asserted, that the Congress had issued letters of marque for cruising against the Portuguese. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 13 April, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received your kind letter of the 23d of December. I rejoice always to hear of your and your good mother's welfare, though I can write but seldom, and safe opportunities are scarce. Looking over some old papers, I find the rough draft of a letter, which I wrote to you fifteen months ago, and which probably miscarried, or your answer miscarried, as I never received any. I enclose it, as the spring is coming on, and the same proposition will now again be in season, and easily executed, if you should approve of it.

You mention Mr. Viny's being with you. What is his present situation? I think he might do well with his wheel business in this country. By your news-

papers, Jacob seems to have taken it to himself. Could he not make up a good coach, with the latest useful improvements, and bring you all in it? It would serve here as a specimen of his abilities, if he chose to stay, or would sell well, if he chose to return. I hope your mother has got over her lowness of spirits about the dropsy. It is common for aged people to have at times swelled ancles towards evening; but it is a temporary disorder, which goes off of itself, and has no consequences. My tender love to her.

If you have an opportunity of sending to Geneva, I like well enough your sending the books thither for my godson grandson, who goes on well there. You do well to keep my granddaughter without stays. God bless her and all of you.

You may imagine I begin to grow happy in my prospects. I should be quite so, if I could see peace and good will restored between our countries; for I enjoy health, competence, friends, and reputation. Peace is the only ingredient wanting to my felicity. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Insincerity of the late Ministry in their Proposals for a Reconciliation.

Passy, 13 April, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Since mine of the 5th, I have thought further of the subject of our late letters. You were of opinion, that the late ministry desired *sincerely* a reconciliation with America, and with that view a separate peace with us was proposed. It happened, that, at the same

time, Lord North had an emissary here to sound the French ministers with regard to peace, and to make them very advantageous propositions, in case they would abandon America. You may judge from hence, my dear friend, what opinion I must have formed of the intentions of your ministers. To convince you of the truth of this, I may acquaint you, that the emissary was a Mr. Forth; and that the answer given him to carry back to the English ministers, was, "*that the King of France is as desirous of peace as the King of England; and that he would accede to it as soon as he could with dignity and safety; but it is a matter of the last importance for His Most Christian Majesty to know, whether the court of London is disposed to treat on equal terms with the allies of France.*"

Mr. Forth went off with this answer for London, but probably did not arrive till after the dismission of the ministers that sent him. You may make any use of this information, which you judge proper. The new ministry may see by it the principles that govern this court; and it will convince them, I hope, that the project of dividing us is as vain, as it would be to us injurious. I cannot judge what they will think or do in consequence of the answer sent by Mr. Forth, if they have seen it. If they love peace, as they have persuaded the English nation and all Europe to believe, they can be under no difficulty. France has opened a path, which in my opinion they may use, without hurting the dignity of their master, or the honor of the nation. If they do not choose it, they doubtless flatter themselves, that a war may still produce successes in favor of England, that have hitherto been withheld. The crowning or frustrating such hopes be-

longs to Divine Providence; may God send us all more wisdom! I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Canada offered to France, to induce her to treat separately. — Answer of the French Court.

Passy, 13 April, 1782.

SIR,

Enclosed with this, I send to your Excellency the packet of correspondence between Mr. Hartley and me, which I promised in my last. You will see, that we held nearly the same language; which gives me pleasure.

While Mr. Hartley was making propositions to me, with the approbation or privity of Lord North, to treat separately from France, that minister had an emissary here, a Mr. Forth, formerly a secretary of Lord Stormont's, making proposals to induce this court to treat without us. I understand, that several sacrifices were offered to be made, and, among the rest, Canada to be given up to France. The substance of the answer appears in my last letter to Mr. Hartley. But there is a sentence omitted in that letter, which I much liked, viz. "*that whenever the two crowns should come to treat, his Most Christian Majesty would show how much the engagements he might enter into were to be relied on, by his exact observance of those he already had with his present allies.*"

If you have received any thing in consequence of your answer by Digges, you will oblige me by communicating it. The ministers here were much pleased

with the account given them of your interview by the ambassador. With great respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. STEVENSON AND MRS. HEWSON.

Paris, 19 April, 1782.

I wrote to you, my dear friends, very lately, and directed my letter to Cheam in Surrey. Mr. Whitefoord tells me, that you are removed to Kensington Square, and I fear that my letter may therefore not find you. I sent it under cover to Mr. William Hodgson, merchant, in Coleman Street; which I mention, that, in case it has not come to hand, you may there inquire for it, though it contains little worth the trouble, as it only expresses what you always knew, that I love you both very much, and very sincerely.

Mr. Whitefoord will inform you how I live, and that I am very well, as happy as the situation of public affairs will permit, only capable of being made more so, if you were here with me; being ever your truly affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, 22 April, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have undertaken to pay all the bills of your acceptance that have come to my knowledge, and I hope in God no more will be drawn upon us, but when funds are first provided. In that case, your constant residence at Madrid is no longer so necessary. You may make a journey either for health or pleasure, with-

out retarding the progress of a negotiation not yet begun. Here you are greatly wanted, for messengers begin to come and go, and there is much talk of a treaty proposed; but I can neither make, nor agree to propositions of peace, without the assistance of my colleagues. Mr. Adams, I am afraid, cannot just now leave Holland. Mr. Jefferson is not in Europe, and Mr. Laurens is a prisoner, though abroad upon parole. I wish, therefore, that you would resolve upon the journey, and render yourself here as soon as possible. You would be of infinite service. Spain has taken four years to consider whether she should treat with us or not. Give her forty, and let us in the mean time mind our own business. I have much to communicate to you, but choose rather to do it *viva voce*, than trust it to letters. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, 24 April, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

The Prince de Masaran being so good as to desire carrying a letter to you, I sit down to write you a few lines, though I hope soon to see you. Enclosed I send a copy of one of Mr. Deane's letters; I shall show you more when you come.

In consequence of a proposition I sent over, the Parliament of Britain have just passed an act for exchanging American prisoners. They have near eleven hundred in the jails of England and Ireland, all committed as charged with high treason. The act is to empower the King, notwithstanding such commitments, to consider them as prisoners of war, according to the

law of nations, and exchange them as such. This seems to be giving up their pretensions of considering us as rebellious subjects, and is a kind of acknowledgment of our independence. Transports are now taking up, to carry back to their country the poor, brave fellows, who have borne for years their cruel captivity, rather than serve our enemies, and an equal number of English are to be delivered in return. I have, upon desire, furnished passports for the vessels.

Our affairs in Holland are *en bon train;* we have some prospect of another loan there; and all goes well here.

The proposal to us of a separate peace with England has been rejected in the manner you wish, and I am pretty certain they will now enter into a general treaty. I wrote you a few lines by last post, and on the same day a few more by the court courier. They were chiefly to press your coming hither to assist in the affair. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

The Late Ministry. — Various Remarks concerning Proposals for Peace.

London, 1 May, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have received a packet from you, containing several letters of various dates. As I shall probably have a safe opportunity of conveyance to you when Mr. Laurens leaves this country, I am now sitting down to write to you an *omnium* kind of letter of various matters as they occur. The late ministry being departed, I may now speak of things more freely. I will

take a sentence in one of your letters for my text. *Vide* yours of April 13th, 1782, in which you say, *you were of opinion, that the late ministry desired* SINCERELY *a reconciliation with America, and with that view a separate peace* with us was proposed. I must qualify this sentence much before I can adopt it as my opinion. As to *reconciliation*, I never gave much credit to them for that wish. *It is a sweet expression. It certainly means* MORE *than peace.* The utmost I ever gave the late ministry credit for, was a wish for peace. And I still believe, that the wisest among them grew from day to day more disposed to peace, or an abatement of the war, in proportion as they became more alarmed for their own situations and their responsibility. Had the war been more successful, I should not have expected much relenting towards peace or reconciliation. That this has always been the measure of my opinion of them, I refer you to some words in a letter from me to you, dated January 5th, 1780, for proof; "But for the point of sincerity; why, as to that, I have not much to say; I have at least expected some hold upon their *prudence.*"

My argument runs thus, it is a *bargain* for *you* (ministers) to be sincere *now.* Common prudence may hint to you to look to yourselves. It has amazed me beyond measure, that this principle of common selfish *prudence* has not had the effect, which I expected. I have not been disposed to be deceived by any conciliatory professions, which I considered only as arising from prudence; and I hope that I have not led you into any deception, having so fully explained myself to you on that head. Had the American war been more prosperous on the part of the late ministry, I do not believe the late resignation would have taken place. But it is evident, from the proposition to the

court of France, which you have communicated to me, (and which I have communicated to the present ministry with your letter,) that even to the last hour some part of the late ministry were still set upon the American war to the last extremity; and probably another more *prudent* part of the ministry would proceed no further; which, if it be so, may reasonably be imputed as the cause of the dissolution of the late ministry.

These have been the arguments, which I have always driven and insisted upon with the greatest expectation of success, viz. *prudential* arguments from the total impracticability of the war, responsibility, &c. I have been astonished beyond measure, that these arguments have not sooner had their effect. If I could give you an idea of the many conferences, which I have had upon the subject, I should tell you, that many times *Felix has trembled.* When reduced by the terror of responsibility either to renounce the American war, or to relinquish their places, they have chosen the latter; which is a most wretched and contemptible retribution, either to their country or to mankind, for the desolation in which they have involved every nation, that they have ever been connected with. Peace they would not leave behind them. Their legacy to their country, and to mankind has been, *Let darkness be the burier of the dead!*

As to the proposal of a separate peace arising from a desire of *reconciliation*, it certainly was so on the part of the people of England; but, on the part of the late ministry, it probably arose from the hopes of suggesting to France ideas of some infidelity on the part of America towards them. If you should ask me, why I have *seemed* to conspire with this, my answer is very plain. In the first place, if I could have prevailed with the late ministry to have actually made an irrevocable

offer, *on their own part*, of a separate peace to America, that very offer would in the same instant have become on their part also a consent to a general peace; because *they* never had any wish to a separate contest with France, and, America being out of the question, *they* would have thought of nothing after that but a general peace. I never could bring them even to this. *They* wished that *America* should make the offer of a separate treaty, for obvious views. *My* proposal was, that *they* should offer irrevocable terms of peace to America. If they had meant what they pretended, and what the people of England did really desire, they would have adopted that proposition. Then the question would have come forward upon the fair and honorable construction of a treaty between France and America, *the essential and direct end* of which was fully accomplished. When I speak of Great Britain offering irrevocable terms of peace to America, I mean such terms as would have effectually satisfied the provision of the treaty, viz. tacit independence.

I send you a paper entitled a *Breviate*,* which I laid before the late ministry; and their not having acted upon it, was a proof to me, that the disposition of their heart to America was not altered, but that all their relenting arose from the impracticability of that war, and their want of success in it. But, desponding as they were at last, it was not inconsistent with my expectations of their conduct, that they should make great offers to France to abandon America. It was the only weapon left in their hands. In course of negotiating with the late ministry, I perceived their courage drooping from time to time, for the last three or four years; and it was upon that ground I gave

* See this *Breviate* in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 351.

them credit for an increasing disposition towards peace. Some dropped off, others sunk under the load of folly, and at last they all failed. My argument *ad homines* to the late ministry might be stated thus. "*If you don't kill them, they will kill you.* But the war is impracticable *on your part;* ergo, the best thing you can do *for your own sake* is to make *peace.*" This was reasoning to men, and through men to things. But there is no measure of rage in pride and disappointment;

> "Spicula cæca relinquunt
> Infixa venis, animasque in vulnere ponunt."

So much for the argument of the *breviate,* as far as it respected the late ministry. It was a test, which proved that they were not sincere in their professions. If they had been in earnest to have given the war a turn towards the House of Bourbon, and to have dropped the American war, a plain road lay before them. The sentiments of the people of England were conformable to the argument of that breviate; or rather I should say, what is the real truth, that the arguments of the breviate were dictated by the notoriety of that sentiment in the people of England. My object and wish always have been to strike at the root of the evil, the American war.

If the British nation have jealousies and resentments against the House of Bourbon, yet still the first step in every case w[illegible]sel be to rescind the American war, and not to kee[illegible] in the rear, to become hereafter, in case [illegible]ng [illegible], a reversionary war with America for [illegible] This reversionary war was ne[illegible] object of the people of England; therefore the [illegible]gument of the breviate was calculated *bonâ fide* to accomplish their views, and to discriminate the fallacious pretences of the late administration from the real wishes of the country, as expressed in

the circular resolution of many counties in the year 1780, first moved at York, on March 28th, 1780. Every other principle and every mode of conduct only imply, as you very justly express it, a secret hope that war may still produce successes, and then —. The designs, which have been lurking under this pretext, could not mean any thing else than this, Who knows, but that we may still talk to America at last? The only test of clear intentions would have been this, to have cut up the American war, and all possible return to it for any cause, or under any pretext. I am confident, that the sentiment of the people of England is, and always has been, to procure peace and reconciliation with America, and to vindicate the national honor in the contest with the House of Bourbon. If this intention had been pursued in a simple and direct manner, I am confident, that the honor and safety of the British nation would long ago have been established in a general peace with all the belligerent powers. These are the sentiments upon which I have always acted in those negotiations, which I have had upon the subject of peace with the late ministry; reconciliation with America, and peace with all the world, upon terms consistent with the honor and safety of my own country.

Peace must be sought in such ways, as promise the greatest degree of practicability. The sentiments of individuals as philanthropic, though be overborne by the power of ancient prejudices, too frequently prevail in the aggregate of their actions. In such case, the philanthropist, who wishes the glory, [illegible] own country and of mankind, must be the bulrush bending to the storm, and not the sturdy oak, unavailingly resisting. National prejudices are, I hope, generally upon the decline. Reason and humanity gain ground every

day against their *natural* enemies, folly and injustice. The ideas of nations being *natural* enemies to each other are generally reprobated. But still *jealousies* and ancient rivalships remain, which obstruct the road to peace among men. If one belligerent nation will entertain a standing force of three or four hundred thousand fighting men, other nations must have defended frontiers and barrier towns, and the barrier of a neighbouring island, whose constitution does not allow a standing military force, must consist in a superiority at sea. It is necessary for her own defence. If all nations by mutual consent will reduce their *offensive* powers, which they only claim under the pretext of necessary *defence*, and bring forward the reign of the millennium; then away with your frontiers and barriers, and your Gibraltars, and the key of the Baltic, and all the hostile array of nations,

"Aspera compositis mitescant sæcula bellis."

These must be the sentiments of every philanthropist in his interior thoughts. But, if we are not to seek peace by some practicable method, accommodated to the remaining prejudices of the multitude, we shall not in our own time, I fear, see that happy day. If Great Britain and France are ancient rivals, then, until the reign of the millennium shall approach, arrange that rivalship upon equitable terms; as the two leading nations of Europe, set them in balance to each other, the one by land, the other by sea. Give to France her elevated rank among the nations of Europe; give to Great Britain the honor of her flag, and the security of her island by her wooden walls; and there would be no obstruction to general and perpetual peace. The prejudices of disrespect between nations prevail only among the inferior ranks. Believe me, for one at least, I have the highest sentiments of respect for

the nation of France. I have no other sentiments of hostility but what are honorable towards them, and which, as a member of a rival State at war with them, consists in the duty of vigilance, which I owe towards the honor and interests of my own country. I am not conscious of a word or a thought, which, *on the point of honor*, I would wish to have concealed from a French minister.

In the mode, which I have proposed, of unravelling the present subjects of jealousy and contest, I would make my proposals openly to France herself. Let America be free, and enjoy happiness and peace for ever. If France and Great Britain have jealousies or rivalships between themselves, as European nations, I then say to France, "Let us settle these points between ourselves, if, unfortunately, we shall not be able by honorable negotiation to compromise the indispensable points of national honor and safety." This would be my language to France, open and undisguised. In the mean while, I desire you to observe, that it would not be with reluctance that I should offer eternal freedom, happiness, and peace to America. You know my thoughts too well to suspect that. I speak only as in a state of war, desirous to arrange the complicated interests, and to secure the respective honor, of nations. My wishes are, and always have been, for the peace, liberty, and safety of mankind. In the pursuit of those blessed objects, not only this country and America, but France herself and the House of Bourbon, may justly claim the conspiring exertions of every free and liberal mind, even among their temporary enemies and rivals. I am, &c. D. HARTLEY.

TO A FRIEND.

Remarks on Cowper's Poems.

Passy, 8 May, 1782.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing me, and am much obliged by your kind present of a book. The relish for reading poetry had long since left me; but there is something so new in the manner, so easy, and yet so correct in the language, so clear in the expression, yet concise, and so just in the sentiments, that I have read the whole with great pleasure, and some of the pieces more than once. I beg you to accept my thankful acknowledgments, and to present my respects to the author.

I shall take care to forward the letters to America, and shall be glad of any other opportunity of doing what may be agreeable to you, being, with great respect for your character, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.*

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* Cowper seems to have been much gratified with the compliment contained in this letter, which was communicated to him by the person to whom it had been written. Cowper forwarded a copy of it to Mr. Unwin, and said; "A merchant, a friend of ours, sent my Poems to one of the first philosophers, one of the most eminent literary characters, as well as one of the most important in the political world, that the present age can boast of. Now perhaps your conjecturing faculties are puzzled, and you begin to ask, 'Who, where, and what is he? Speak out, for I am all impatience.' I will not say a word more; the letter in which he returned his thanks shall speak for me."

He then inserts the letter, and adds; "We may now treat the critics as the Archbishop of Toledo treated Gil Blas, when he found fault with one of his sermons. His Grace gave him a kick, and said, 'Begone for a jackanapes, and furnish yourself with a better taste, if you know where to find it.'"—SOUTHEY's edition of *Cowper's Works*, Vol. IV. p. 217.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Condition of Affairs in the United States.

Philadelphia, 22 May, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I expected to have written you a long letter, more particularly as it is some time since you have received any information from this country, the enemy having effectually blocked up our ports for some months past. But I find myself so extremely hurried, that I have hardly leisure to write this, the vessel by which it is to be sent going sooner than I apprehended.

You will receive herewith a letter to His Most Christian Majesty, which you will present, and a copy, which you will be pleased to deliver to the Count de Vergennes. This I believe is the usual form. You will also receive in the enclosed papers an account of the marks of respect, with which the annunciation of the birth of the Dauphin was received. These are of some importance, at a time when Great Britain is endeavouring to represent us as weary of the alliance, and anxiously wishing to return to our connexion with them. It is probable, that the late changes in the British administration, and the conciliatory measures they propose, may excite apprehensions of our firmness. I have the pleasure of assuring you, that it has not produced the least effect; all orders of people seem to agree, that it should redouble our vigilance; and, while it argues the weakness of the enemy, it serves as a spring to our exertions.

Sir Guy Carleton, shortly after his arrival, wrote a complimentary letter to General Washington, sending him an account of his appointment, and the prints which contained the Parliamentary debates, and re-

questing leave to send his secretary with despatches to Congress. The general refused the passport, till he had the sense of Congress thereon; and, upon Sir Guy's letter being laid before them, they came to the resolution enclosed.

The papers I send you contain also resolutions of the State of Maryland, and of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, which, I believe, speak the language of all the States, which will, I doubt not, make similar declarations when their legislatures shall be convened. So that you may safely assure his Majesty's ministers, that no art which Great Britain can put in practice will have the least influence in lessening the attachment of the people of this country to the principles of the alliance. It is true, their expectations of powerful assistance this campaign are very high. They saw with some pain last year, that the fleet was withdrawn when the enemy were absolutely at their feet, and when one month's stay would have reduced either New York or Charleston. They look eagerly for the return of the fleet. They generally believe this to be the last campaign in America. There is no knowing what effect a disappointment in this hope would have. I believe, from the present view of things, that they would bear it with fortitude; but I should be sorry to see it put to the trial.

Our trade has suffered astonishingly of late; the influence which this will have upon our internal resources is much to be apprehended. It is to be wished, that France would see the great advantages she would derive from keeping a superiority on this coast, where her fleets would be maintained cheaply, while they protected our commerce, and compelled England either to risk her army, or to keep a regular fleet here at five times their expense. Enclosed is a statement of

our trade, drawn up by Mr. Morris. You are requested to communicate this to the court of Versailles, and to use every means in your power to bring the court to concur in adopting it.

I also enclose a resolution of Congress, to request you to apply for the prisoners due to us, in order that they may be sent here and exchanged for our seamen, who are confined without the hope of relief. Is it impossible to devise some means for the enlargement of those, who are confined in England? Can no cartel be settled; or no means devised for sending them here to be exchanged? Their case is really pitiable. I have the honor to be, &c.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, June, 1782.

I send you a few of your translations. I did not put your name as the translator (which I at first intended,) because I apprehended it might *look like* vanity in you; and, as I shall otherwise make it known, I think the omitting it will *look like* modesty.

Present my sincere love to your mother. Nothing would give me greater pleasure, than to see you both once more, well and happy. But you, who are truly sagacious and honest, and can give good advice, tell me frankly your sentiments, whether, in case of a peace, it will be prudent in me to visit England, before I return to America. I have no other call there, but the pleasure of seeing my friends, of whom I must again soon take leave; and my appearing may perhaps exasperate my enemies. If you think this not of serious consequence, tell me whether I may come

right through London to Kensington, with the view of finding room in your house; or whether I should take a lodging in the city to return to. Do not let me in the least incommode you.

I forget whether I ever acknowledged the receipt of the prints of Mr. Hewson. I have one of them framed in my study. I think it very like. I believe I acquainted you with good Mr. Dubourg's death. He had enlarged his little piece, which you translated; and, in respect for his memory, I have had it printed. I enclose a copy.

I am sorry to learn the still unsettled state of Mr. ———'s family. Mrs. ——— is undoubtedly well qualified to teach English here, but I cannot think it would be worth her while to come hither for that pur pose. It is true, that our language is in vogue here, and many learn a little of it, but the instructers are poorly paid, and the employ precarious and uncertain; this observation is so general, as to have given rise to a proverb, *Pauvre comme un maître de langues* Your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

Conduct of Mankind to each other. — Apologue. — Experiments of Lavoisier.

Passy, 7 June, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your kind letter of the 7th of April, also one of the 3d of May. I have always great pleasure in hearing from you, in learning that you are well, and that you continue your experiments. I should rejoice much, if I could once more recover the leisure

to search with you into the works of nature; I mean the *inanimate*, not the *animate* or moral part of them; the more I discovered of the former, the more I admired them; the more I know of the latter, the more I am disgusted with them. Men I find to be a sort of beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily provoked than reconciled, more disposed to do mischief to each other than to make reparation, much more easily deceived than undeceived, and having more pride and even pleasure in killing than in begetting one another; for without a blush they assemble in great armies at noonday to destroy, and when they have killed as many as they can, they exaggerate the number to augment the fancied glory; but they creep into corners, or cover themselves with the darkness of night, when they mean to beget, as being ashamed of a virtuous action. A virtuous action it would be, and a vicious one the killing of them, if the species were really worth producing or preserving; but of this I begin to doubt.

I know you have no such doubts, because, in your zeal for their welfare, you are taking a great deal of pains to save their souls. Perhaps as you grow older, you may look upon this as a hopeless project, or an idle amusement, repent of having murdered in mephitic air so many honest, harmless mice, and wish, that, to prevent mischief, you had used boys and girls instead of them. In what light we are viewed by superior beings, may be gathered from a piece of late West India news, which possibly has not yet reached you. A young angel of distinction being sent down to this world on some business, for the first time, had an old courier-spirit assigned him as a guide. They arrived over the seas of Martinico, in the middle of the long day of obstinate fight between the

fleets of Rodney and De Grasse. When, through the clouds of smoke, he saw the fire of the guns, the decks covered with mangled limbs, and bodies dead or dying; the ships sinking, burning, or blown into the air; and the quantity of pain, misery, and destruction, the crews yet alive were thus with so much eagerness dealing round to one another; he turned angrily to his guide, and said, "You blundering blockhead, you are ignorant of your business; you undertook to conduct me to the earth, and you have brought me into hell!" "No, Sir," says the guide, "I have made no mistake; this is really the earth, and these are men. Devils never treat one another in this cruel manner; they have more sense, and more of what men (vainly) call humanity."

But to be serious, my dear old friend, I love you as much as ever, and I love all the honest souls that meet at the London Coffee-House. I only wonder how it happened, that they and my other friends in England came to be such good creatures in the midst of so perverse a generation. I long to see them and you once more, and I labor for peace with more earnestness, that I may again be happy in your sweet society.

I showed your letter to the Duke de Larochefoucauld, who thinks with me, that the new experiments you have made are extremely curious; and he has given me thereupon a note, which I enclose, and I request you would furnish me with the answer desired.

Yesterday the Count du Nord* was at the Academy of Sciences, when sundry experiments were exhibited for his entertainment; among them, one by

* Grand Duke of Russia, afterwards the Emperor Paul the First.

M. Lavoisier, to show that the strongest fire we yet know, is made in a charcoal blown upon with dephlogisticated air. In a heat so produced, he melted platina presently, the fire being much more powerful than that of the strongest burning mirror. Adieu, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JONATHAN SHIPLEY, BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH.

Passy, 10 June, 1782.

I received and read the letter from my dear and much respected friend with infinite pleasure. After so long a silence, and the long continuance of its unfortunate causes, a line from you was a prognostic of happier times approaching, when we may converse and communicate freely, without danger from the malevolence of men enraged by the ill success of their distracted projects.

I long with you for the return of peace, on the general principles of humanity. The hope of being able to pass a few more of my last days happily in the sweet conversations and company I once enjoyed at Twyford,* is a particular motive that adds strength to the general wish, and quickens my industry to procure that best of blessings. After much occasion to consider the folly and mischiefs of a state of warfare, and the little or no advantage obtained even by those nations, who have conducted it with the most success, I have been apt to think, that there has never been, nor ever will be, any such thing as a *good* war, or a *bad* peace.

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* The country residence of the Bishop.

You ask if I still relish my old studies. I relish them, but I cannot pursue them. My time is engrossed unhappily with other concerns. I requested of the Congress last year my discharge from this public station, that I might enjoy a little leisure in the evening of a long life of business; but it was refused me, and I have been obliged to drudge on a little longer.

You are happy as your years come on, in having that dear and most amiable family about you. Four daughters! how rich! I have but one, and she, necessarily detained from me at a thousand leagues distance. I feel the want of that tender care of me, which might be expected from a daughter, and would give the world for one. Your shades are all placed in a row over my fireplace, so that I not only have you always in my mind, but constantly before my eyes.

The cause of liberty and America has been greatly obliged to you. I hope you will live long to see that country flourish under its new constitution, which I am sure will give you great pleasure. Will you permit me to express another hope, that, now your friends are in power, they will take the first opportunity of showing the sense they ought to have of your virtues and your merit?

Please to make my best respects acceptable to Mrs. Shipley, and embrace for me tenderly all our dear children. With the utmost esteem, respect, and veneration, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 13 June, 1782.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I received your pleasing letter of the 1st of May, through the hands of Mr. Hodgson, and one since by Mr. Oswald. You cannot be more pleased in talking about your children, your methods of instructing them, and the progress they make, than I am in hearing it, and in finding, that, instead of following the idle amusements, which both your fortune and the custom of the age might have led you into, your delight and your duty go together, by employing your time in the education of your offspring. This is following nature and reason, instead of fashion; than which nothing is more becoming the character of a woman of sense and virtue.

We have here a female writer on education, who has lately published three volumes, that are much talked of. I will send them to you by the first opportunity. They are much praised and much censured. The author, Madame la Comtesse de Genlis, is made, in consequence of her writing that work, governess of the children of the Duc de Chartres, who is son of the Duke of Orleans. Perhaps you may not find much in it, that can be of use to you, but you may find something.

I enclose another piece on the same subject, written by another Comtesse, Madame de Forbach, who does me the honor of calling me her friend, by which means I have a copy, it not being published. When you have leisure, I shall like to see your remarks.

Do not send any books to Geneva. The troubles of that city have driven the school and my boy out of it, and I have thoughts of sending for him home. Perhaps I may put him for a while under your care,

to recover his English in the same school with your sons.

I hope with you, that there may be a peace, and that we may once more meet. Remember me kindly to Mr. and Mrs. Viny. I do not at present want a carriage. Embrace your good mother for me with much affection, and believe me to be, my dear friend, yours ever, B. FRANKLIN.

TO RICHARD PRICE.

Effect of Dr. Price's Writings. — Influence of the Press.

Passy, 13 June, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I congratulate you on the late revolution in your public affairs. Much good may arise from it, though possibly not all, that good men and even the new ministers themselves may have wished or expected. The change, however, in the sentiments of the nation, in which I see evident effects of your writings, with those of our deceased friend Mr. Burgh,* and others of our valuable Club, should encourage you to proceed.

The ancient Roman and Greek orators could only speak to the number of citizens capable of being assembled within the reach of their voice. Their writings

* "The death of this amiable and excellent person had happened a few weeks before the writing of this letter. He had long been the intimate friend of Dr. Price, and one of the principal members of his congregation at Newington Green. He was the author of several valuable works on moral and political subjects, and in all of them proved himself the steadfast friend of virtue and liberty. His last publication, under the title of 'Political Disquisitions,' abounds with the most important information on the extreme defectiveness of the national representation, and cannot fail to be admired by all who wish to restore the constitution to its original purity."—MORGAN'S *Life of Price*, p. 96.

had little effect, because the bulk of the people could not read. Now by the press we can speak to nations; and good books and well written pamphlets have great and general influence. The facility, with which the same truths may be repeatedly enforced by placing them daily in different lights in newspapers, which are everywhere read, gives a great chance of establishing them. And we now find, that it is not only right to strike while the iron is hot, but that it may be very practicable to heat it by continually striking.

I suppose all may now correspond with more freedom, and I shall be glad to hear from you as often as may be convenient to you. Please to present my best respects to our good old friends of the London Coffee-House. I often figure to myself the pleasure I should have in being once more seated among them. With the greatest and most sincere esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, yours ever,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

British Ministry. — The Dutch friendly to the United States. — Mr. Jay. — Policy of Russia.

The Hague, 13 June, 1782.

SIR,

I had yesterday, at Amsterdam, the honor of receiving your Excellency's letter of June the 2d.

The discovery, that Mr. Grenville's power was only to treat with France, does not surprise me at all. The British ministry are too divided among themselves, and have too formidable an opposition against them in the King and the old ministers, and are possessed of too little of the confidence of the nation, to have courage

to make concessions of any sort, especially since the news of their successes in the East and West Indies. What their vanity will end in, God only knows; for my own part, I cannot see a probability, that they will ever make peace, until their finances are ruined, and such distresses brought upon them, as will work up their parties into a civil war.

I wish their enemies could by any means be persuaded to carry on the war against them in places, where they might be sure of triumphs, instead of insisting on pursuing it where they are sure of defeat. But we must take patience, and wait for time to do what wisdom might easily and soon do.

I have not as yet taken any engagements with the Dutch not to make peace without them; but I will take such engagements in a moment, if the Dutch will take them, and I believe they would very cheerfully. I shall not propose it, however, till I have the concurrence of the Duc de la Vauguyon, who will do nothing without the instructions of his court. I would not delay it a moment from any expectation, that the English will acknowledge our independence and make peace with us, because I have no such expectations. The permanent friendship of the Dutch may be easily obtained by the United States; that of England, never; it is gone with the days before the flood. If we ever enjoy the smallest degree of sincere friendship again from England, I am totally incapable of seeing the character of a nation or the connexion of things; which, however, may be the case for what I know. They have brought themselves into such a situation! Spain, Holland, America, the armed neutrality, have all such pretensions and demands upon them, that where is the English minister, or member of Parliament, that dares vote for the concession to them? The pretensions of

France I believe would be so moderate, that possibly they might be acceded to. But it is much to be feared, that Spain, who deserves the least, will demand the most; in short, the work of peace appears so impracticable and chimerical, that I am happy in being restrained to this country, by my duty, and by this means excused from troubling my head much about it.

I have a letter from America, that informed me, that Mr. Jay had refused to act in the commission for peace; but, if he is on the way to Paris, as you suppose, I presume my information must be a mistake, which I am very glad of. Mr. Laurens did me the honor of a very short visit, in his way to France; but I was very sorry to learn from him, that, in a letter to your Excellency from Ostend, he had declined serving in the commission for peace. I had vast pleasure in his conversation; for I found him possessed of the most exact judgment concerning our enemies, and of the same noble sentiments in all things, which I saw in him in Congress.

What is the system of Russia? Does she suppose, that England has too many enemies upon her, and that their demands and pretensions are too high? Does she seek to embroil affairs, and to light up a general war in Europe? Is Denmark in concert with her, or any other power? Her conduct is a phenomenon. Is there any secret negotiation or intrigue on foot to form a party for England among the powers of Europe, and to make a balance against the power of the enemies of England?

The States of Holland and several other Provinces have taken a resolution against the mediation for a separate peace; and this nation seems to be well fixed in its system, and in the common cause.

My best respects and affections to my old friend, Mr. Jay, if you please. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c. JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN INGENHOUSZ.

Lavoisier. — American Affairs.

Passy, 21 June, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry that any misunderstanding should arise between you and Dr. ———. The indiscretions of friends on both sides often occasion such misunderstandings. When they produce public altercations, the ignorant are diverted at the expense of the learned. I hope, therefore, that you will omit the polemic piece in your French edition, and take no public notice of the improper behaviour of your friend; but go on with your excellent experiments, produce facts, improve science, and do good to mankind. Reputation will follow, and the little injustices of contemporary laborers will be forgotten; my example may encourage you, or else I should not mention it. You know, that, when my papers were first published, the Abbé Nollet, then high in reputation, attacked them in a book of letters. An answer was expected from me, but I made none to that book, nor to any other. They are now all neglected, and the truth seems to be established. You can always employ your time better than in polemics

M. Lavoisier the other day showed an experiment at the Academy of Sciences, to the Count du Nord, that is said to be curious. He kindled a hollow charcoal, and blew into it a stream of dephlogisticated air. In this focus, which is said to be the hottest fire human art has yet been able to produce, he melted platina in a few minutes.

Our American affairs wear a better aspect now than at any time heretofore. Our counsels are perfectly united; our people all armed and disciplined. Much and frequent service, as militia, has indeed made them all soldiers. Our enemies are much diminished, and reduced to two or three garrisons; our commerce and agriculture flourish. England at length sees the difficulty of conquering us, and no longer demands submission, but asks for peace. She would now think herself happy to obtain a federal union with us, and will endeavour it; but, perhaps, will be disappointed, as it is the interest of all Europe to prevent it. I last year requested of Congress to release me from this service, that I might spend the evening of life more agreeably in philosophic leisure; but I was refused. If I had succeeded, it was my intention to make the tour of Italy, with my grandson, pass into Germany, and spend some time happily with you, whom I have always loved, ever since I knew you, with uninterrupted affection.

We have lost our common friend, the excellent Pringle. How many pleasing hours you and I have passed together in his company! I must soon follow him, being now in my seventy-seventh year; but you have yet a prospect of many years of usefulness still before you, which I hope you will fully enjoy; and I am persuaded you will ever kindly remember your truly affectionate friend, B. FRANKLIN.

TO MISS ALEXANDER.

Passy, 24 June, 1782.

—I am not at all displeased, that the thesis and dedication, with which we were threatened, are blown

over, for I dislike much all sorts of mummery. The republic of letters has gained no reputation, whatever else it may have gained, by the commerce of dedications; I never made one, and I never desired, that one should be made to me. When I submitted to receive this, it was from the bad habit I have long had of doing every thing that ladies desire me to do; there is no refusing any thing to Madame la Marck, nor to you. I have been to pay my respects to that amiable lady, not merely because it was a compliment due to her, but because I love her; which induces me to excuse her not letting me in; the same reason I should have for excusing your faults, if you had any.

I have not seen your papa since the receipt of your pleasing letter, so could arrange nothing with him respecting the carriage. During seven or eight days, I shall be very busy; after that you shall hear from me, and the carriage shall be at your service. How could you think of writing to me about chimneys and fires, in such weather as this! Now is the time for the frugal lady you mention to save her wood, obtain *plus de chaleur*, and lay it up against winter, as people do ice against summer. Frugality is an enriching virtue; a virtue I never could acquire in myself; but I was once lucky enough to find it in a wife, who thereby became a fortune to me. Do you possess it? If you do, and I were twenty years younger, I would give your father one thousand guineas for you. I know you would be worth more to me as a *ménagère*, but I am covetous, and love good bargains. Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. Franklin.

JOURNAL

OF THE

NEGOTIATION FOR PEACE WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

FROM MARCH 21ST TO JULY 1ST, 1782.

Passy, 9 May, 1782.

As, since the change of the ministry in England, some serious professions have been made of their disposition to peace, and of their readiness to enter into a general treaty for that purpose; and as the concerns and claims of five nations are to be discussed in that treaty, which must therefore be interesting to the present age, and to posterity, I am inclined to keep a journal of the proceedings, as far as they come to my knowledge; and, to make it more complete, I will first endeavour to recollect what has already past. Great affairs sometimes take their rise from small circumstances. My good friend and neighbour, Madame Brillon, being at Nice all last winter for her health, with her very amiable family, wrote to me, that she had met with some English gentry there, whose acquaintance proved agreeable; among them she named Lord Cholmondely, who, she said, had promised to call in his return to England, and drink tea with us at Passy. He left Nice sooner than she supposed, and came to Paris long before her. On the 21st of March, I received the following note.

"Lord Cholmondely's compliments to Dr. Franklin; he sets out for London to-morrow evening, and should be glad to see him for five minutes before he went. Lord Cholmondely will call upon him at any time in the morning he shall please to appoint.

"*Thursday evening. Hôtel de Chartres.*"

I wrote for answer, that I should be at home all the next morning, and glad to see his Lordship, if he did me the honor of calling on me. He came accordingly. I had before no personal knowledge of this nobleman. We talked of our friends whom he left at Nice, then of affairs in England, and the late resolutions of the Commons on Mr. Conway's motion. He told me, that he knew Lord Shelburne had a great regard for me, that he was sure his Lordship would be pleased to hear from me, and that if I would write a line he should have a pleasure in carrying it. On which I wrote the following.

TO LORD SHELBURNE.

"Passy, 22 March, 1782.

"My Lord,

"Lord Cholmondely having kindly offered to take a letter from me to your Lordship, I embrace the opportunity of assuring the continuance of my ancient respect for your talents and virtues, and of congratulating you on the returning good disposition of your country in favor of America, which appears in the late resolutions of the Commons. I am persuaded it will have good effects. I hope it will tend to produce a *general peace*, which I am sure your Lordship, with all good men, desires, which I wish to see before I die, and to which I shall, with infinite pleasure, contribute every thing in my power.

"Your friends, the Abbé Morellet and Madame Helvétius, are well. You have made the latter very happy by your present of gooseberry bushes, which arrived in five days, and in excellent order. With great and sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c. &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

Soon after this we heard from England, that a total change had taken place in the ministry, and that Lord Shelburne had come in as Secretary of State. But I thought no more of my letter, till an old friend and near neighbour of mine many years in London appeared at Passy, and introduced a Mr. Oswald, who, he said, had a great desire to see me; and Mr. Oswald, after some little conversation, gave me the following letters from Lord Shelburne and Mr. Laurens.

FROM LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

"London, 6 April, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been favored with your letter and am much obliged by your remembrance. I find myself returned nearly to the same situation, which you remember me to have occupied nineteen years ago; and I should be very glad to talk to you as I did then, and afterwards, in 1767, upon the means of promoting the happiness of mankind, a subject much more agreeable to my nature, than the best concerted plans for spreading misery and devastation. I have had a high opinion of the compass of your mind, and of your foresight. I have often been beholden to both, and shall be glad to be so again, as far as is compatible with your situation. Your letter, discovering the same disposition, has made me send to you Mr. Oswald. I have had a longer acquaintance with him, than even I have had

the pleasure to have with you. I believe him an honest man, and, after consulting some of our common friends, I have thought him the fittest for the purpose. He is a pacifical man, and conversant in those negotiations, which are most interesting to mankind. This has made me prefer him to any of our speculative friends, or to any person of higher rank. He is fully apprized of my mind, and you may give full credit to every thing he assures you of. At the same time, if any other channel occurs to you, I am ready to embrace it. I wish to retain the same simplicity and good faith, which subsisted between us in transactions of less importance. I have the honor to be, &c.

"SHELBURNE."

FROM HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

"London, 7 April, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"Richard Oswald, Esquire, who will do me the honor of delivering this, is a gentleman of the strictest candor and integrity. I dare give such assurances from an experience little short of thirty years, and to add, you will be perfectly safe in conversing freely with him on the business he will introduce, a business, which Mr. Oswald has disinterestedly engaged in, from motives of benevolence; and from the choice of the man a persuasion follows, that the electors mean to be in earnest.

"Some people in this country, who have too long indulged themselves in abusing every thing American, have been pleased to circulate an opinion, that Dr. Franklin is a very cunning man; in answer to which, I have remarked to Mr. Oswald, 'Dr. Franklin knows very well how to manage a cunning man; but, when the Doctor converses or treats with a man of can-

dor, there is no man more candid than himself.' I do not know whether you will ultimately agree on political sketches; but I am sure, as gentlemen, you will part very well pleased with each other. Should you, Sir, think proper to communicate to me your sentiments and advice on our affairs, the more amply the more acceptable, and probably the more serviceable; Mr. Oswald will take charge of your despatches, and afford a secure means of conveyance.

"To this gentleman I refer you for general information of a journey, which I am immediately to make, partly in his company, to Ostend, to file off for the Hague. I feel a willingness, infirm as I am, to attempt doing as much good as can be expected from such a prisoner upon parole. As General Burgoyne is certainly exchanged, (a circumstance, by the by, which possibly might have embarrassed us, had your late propositions been accepted,) may I presume at my return to offer another lieutenant-general, now in England, a prisoner upon parole, in exchange; or what shall I offer in exchange for myself, a thing in my own estimation of no great value? I have the honor to be, with great respect, and, permit me to add, great reverence, Sir, &c.

"HENRY LAURENS."

I entered into conversation with Mr. Oswald. He was represented in the letter as fully apprized of Lord Shelburne's mind, and I was desirous of knowing it. All I could learn was, that the new ministry sincerely wished for a peace; that they considered the object of the war, to France and America, as obtained; that, if the independence of the United States was agreed to, there was no other point in dispute, and therefore nothing to hinder a pacification; that they were ready

to treat of *peace*, but he intimated, that, if France should insist upon terms too humiliating to England, they could still continue the war, having yet great strength and many resources left. I let him know, that America would not treat but in concert with France, and that, my colleagues not being here, I could do nothing of importance in the affair; but that, if he pleased, I would present him to M. de Vergennes, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He consenting, I wrote and sent the following letter.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

"Passy, 16 April, 1782.

"SIR,

"An English nobleman, Lord Cholmondely, lately returning from Italy, called upon me here, at the time when we received the news of the first resolutions of the House of Commons relating to America. In conversation he said, that he knew his friend, Lord Shelburne, had a great regard for me, that it would be pleasing to him to hear of my welfare, and receive a line from me, of which he, Lord Cholmondely, should like to be the bearer, adding, if there should be a change of ministry, he believed Lord Shelburne would be employed. I thereupon wrote a few lines, of which I enclose a copy. This day I received an answer, which I also enclose, together with another letter from Mr. Laurens. They both, as your Excellency will see, recommend the bearer, Mr. Oswald, as a very honest, sensible man. I have had a little conversation with him. He tells me, that there has been a desire of making a separate peace with America, and continuing the war with France and Spain, but that now all wise people give up that idea as impracticable; and it is his private opinion, that the ministry do sincerely desire a

general peace, and that they will readily come into it, provided France does not insist upon conditions too humiliating for England, in which case she will make great and violent efforts, rather than submit to them, and that much is still in her power, &c.

"I told the gentleman, that I could not enter into particulars with him, but in concert with the ministers of this court. And I proposed introducing him to your Excellency, after communicating to you the letters he brought me, in case you should think fit to see him, with which he appeared to be pleased. I intend waiting on you to-morrow, when you will please to acquaint me with your intentions, and favor me with your counsels. He had heard nothing of Forth's mission, and the old ministry had not acquainted the new with that transaction. Mr. Laurens came over with him in the same vessel, and went from Ostend to Holland. With great respect, I am, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

The next day, being at court with the foreign ministers, as usual on Tuesdays, I saw M. de Vergennes, who acquainted me, that he had caused the letters to be translated, had considered the contents, and should like to see Mr. Oswald. We agreed that the interview should be on Wednesday at ten o'clock. Immediately on my return home, I wrote to Mr. Oswald, acquainting him with what had passed at Versailles, and proposing that he should be with me at half past eight the next morning, in order to proceed thither. I received from him the following answer.

"Paris, 17 April.

"SIR,

"I have the honor of yours by the bearer, and shall be sure to wait on you to-morrow, at half past eight, and am, with much respect, &c.

"RICHARD OSWALD."

He came accordingly, and we arrived at Versailles punctually. M. de Vergennes received him with much civility. Mr. Oswald not being ready in speaking French, M. de Rayneval interpreted. Mr. Oswald at first thought of sending an express, with the account of the conversation, which continued near an hour, and was offered a passport, but finally concluded to go himself; and I wrote the next day the letter following.

TO LORD SHELBURNE.

"Passy, 18 April, 1782.

"MY LORD,

"I have received the letter your Lordship did me the honor of writing to me on the 6th instant. I congratulate you on your new appointment to the honorable and important office you formerly filled so worthily, which must be so far pleasing to you, as it affords you more opportunities of doing good, and of serving your country essentially in its great concerns.

"I have conversed a good deal with Mr. Oswald, and am much pleased with him. He appears to me a wise and honest man. I acquainted him, that I was commissioned, with others, to treat of and conclude a peace. That full powers were given us for that purpose, and that the Congress promised in good faith to ratify, confirm, and cause to be faithfully observed, the treaty we should make; but that we would not treat separately from France, and I proposed introducing

him to the Count de Vergennes, to whom I communicated your Lordship's letter containing Mr. Oswald's character, as a foundation for the interviews. He will acquaint you, that the assurance he gave of His Britannic Majesty's good dispositions towards peace was well received, and assurances returned of the same good dispositions in His Most Christian Majesty.

"With regard to circumstances relative to a treaty, M. de Vergennes observed, that the King's engagements were such, that he could not treat without the concurrence of his allies; that the treaty should, therefore, be for a general, not a partial peace; that, if the parties were disposed to finish the war speedily by themselves, it would perhaps be best to treat at Paris, as an ambassador from Spain was already there, and the Commissioners from America might easily and soon be assembled there. Or, if they chose to make use of the proposed mediation, they might treat at Vienna; but that the King was so truly willing to put a speedy end to the war, that he would agree to any place the King of England should think proper.

"I leave the rest of the conversation to be related to your Lordship by Mr. Oswald; and, that he might do it more easily and fully, than he could by letter, I was of opinion with him, that it would be best he should return immediately and do it *vivâ voce*. Being myself but one of the four persons now in Europe, commissioned by the Congress to treat of peace, I can make no propositions of much importance without them. I can only express my wish, that, if Mr. Oswald returns hither, he may bring with him the agreement of your court to treat for a general peace, and the proposal of place and time, that I may immediately write to Messrs. Adams, Laurens, and Jay. I suppose, that in this case, your Lordship will think it proper to have

Mr. Laurens discharged from the engagements he entered into, when he was admitted to bail. I desire no other channel of communication between us, than that of Mr. Oswald, which I think your Lordship has chosen with much judgment. He will be witness of my acting with all the simplicity and good faith, which you do me the honor to expect from me; and, if he is enabled, when he returns hither, to communicate more fully your Lordship's mind on the principal points to be settled, I think it may contribute much to the blessed work our hearts are engaged in.

"By the act of Parliament relative to American prisoners, I see the King is empowered to exchange them. I hope those you have in England and Ireland may be sent home soon to their country, in flags of truce, and exchanged for an equal number of your people. Permit me to add, that I think it would be well, if some kindness were mixed in the transaction, with regard to their comfortable accommodation on shipboard; as these poor unfortunate people have been long absent from their families and friends, and rather hardly treated. With great and sincere respect, I have the honor to be, my Lord, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

To the account, contained in this letter, of what passed in the conversation with the minister, I should add his frank declaration, that, as the foundation of a good and durable peace should be laid in justice, whenever a treaty was entered upon, he had several demands of justice to make from England. Of this, says he, I give you previous notice. What these demands were, he did not particularly say. One occurred to me, viz. reparation for the injury done in taking a number of French ships by surprise, before the

declaration of the preceding war, contrary to the law of nations. Mr. Oswald seemed to wish to obtain some propositions to carry back with him; but M. de Vergennes said to him, very properly, "There are four nations engaged in the war against you, who cannot, till they have consulted and know each other's minds, be ready to make propositions. Your court being without allies and alone, knowing its own mind, can express it immediately. It is therefore more natural to expect the first proposition from you."

On our return from Versailles, Mr. Oswald took occasion to impress me with ideas, that the present weakness of the government of England, with regard to continuing the war, was owing chiefly to the division of sentiments about it; that, in case France should make demands too humiliating for England to submit to, the spirit of the nation would be roused, unanimity would prevail, and resources would not be wanting. He said, there was no want of money in the nation; that the chief difficulty lay in the finding out new taxes to raise it; and, perhaps, that difficulty might be avoided by shutting up the Exchequer, stopping the payment of the interest of the public funds, and applying that money to the support of the war. I made no reply to this; for I did not desire to discourage their stopping payment, which I considered as cutting the throat of the public credit, and a means of adding fresh exasperation against them with the neighbouring nations. Such menaces were besides an encouragement with me, remembering the adage, that *they who threaten are afraid.*

The next morning, when I had written the above letter to Lord Shelburne, I went with it to Mr. Oswald's lodgings, and gave it to him to read before I sealed it; that, in case any thing might be in it with

which he was not satisfied, it might be corrected; but he expressed himself much pleased.

In going to him, I had also in view the entering into a conversation, which might draw out something of the mind of his court on the subject of Canada and Nova Scotia. I had thrown some loose thoughts on paper, which I intended to serve as memorandums for my discourse, but without a fixed intention of showing them to him. On his saying that he was obliged to me for the good opinion I had expressed of him to Lord Shelburne in my letter, and assuring me, that he had entertained the same of me, I observed, that I perceived Lord Shelburne had placed great confidence in him, and, as we had happily the same in each other, we might possibly, by a free communication of sentiments, and a previous settling of our own minds on some of the important points, be the means of great good, by impressing our sentiments on the minds of those, with whom they might have influence, and where their being received might be of importance.

I then remarked, that his nation seemed to desire a reconciliation; that, to obtain this, the party which had been the aggressor and had cruelly treated the other, should show some marks of concern for what was past, and some disposition to make reparation; that perhaps there were things, which America might demand by way of reparation, and which England might yield, and that the effect would be vastly greater, if they appeared to be voluntary, and to spring from returning good will; that I, therefore, wished England would think of offering something to relieve those, who had suffered by its scalping and burning parties. Lives indeed could not be restored nor compensated, but the villages and houses wantonly destroyed might be rebuilt, &c. I then touched upon the affair of

Canada, and, as in a former conversation he had mentioned his opinion, that the giving up of that country to the English, at the last peace, had been a politic act in France, for that it had weakened the ties between England and her colonies, and that he himself had predicted from it the late revolution, I spoke of the occasions of future quarrel that might be produced by her continuing to hold it; hinting at the same time, but not expressing too plainly, that such a situation, to us so dangerous, would necessarily oblige us to cultivate and strengthen our union with France. He appeared much struck with my discourse, and, as I frequently looked at my paper, he desired to see it. After some little delay, I allowed him to read it; the following is an exact copy.

"NOTES FOR CONVERSATION.

"To make a peace durable, what may give occasion for future wars should if practicable be removed.

"The territory of the United States and that of Canada, by long extended frontiers, touch each other.

"The settlers on the frontiers of the American provinces are generally the most disorderly of the people, who, being far removed from the eye and control of their respective governments, are more bold in committing offences against neighbours, and are for ever occasioning complaints and furnishing matter for fresh differences between their States.

"By the late debates in Parliament, and public writings, it appears, that Britain desires a *reconciliation* with the Americans. It is a sweet word. It means much more than a mere peace, and what is heartily to be wished for. Nations make a peace whenever they are both weary of making war. But, if one of them has made war upon the other unjustly, and has wantonly

and unnecessarily done it great injuries, and refuses reparation, though there may, for the present, be peace, the resentment of those injuries will remain, and will break out again in vengeance when occasions offer. These occasions will be watched for by one side, feared by the other, and the peace will never be secure; nor can any cordiality subsist between them.

"Many houses and villages have been burnt in America by the English and their allies, the Indians. I do not know that the Americans will insist on reparation; perhaps they may. But would it not be better for England to offer it? Nothing would have a greater tendency to conciliate, and much of the future commerce and returning intercourse between the two countries may depend on the reconciliation. Would not the advantage of reconciliation by such means be greater than the expense?

"If then a way can be proposed, which may tend to efface the memory of injuries, at the same time that it takes away the occasions of fresh quarrels and mischief, will it not be worth considering, especially if it can be done, not only without expense, but be a means of saving?

"Britain possesses Canada. Her chief advantage from that possession consists in the trade for peltry. Her expenses in governing and defending that settlement must be considerable. It might be humiliating to her to give it up on the demand of America. Perhaps America will not demand it; some of her political rulers may consider the fear of such a neighbour, as a means of keeping the thirteen States more united among themselves, and more attentive to military discipline. But on the mind of the people in general would it not have an excellent effect, if Britain should voluntarily offer to give up this province;

though on these conditions, that she shall in all times coming have and enjoy the right of free trade thither, unincumbered with any duties whatsoever; that so much of the vacant lands there shall be sold, as will raise a sum sufficient to pay for the houses burnt by the British troops and their Indians; and also to indemnify the royalists for the confiscation of their estates?

"This is mere conversation matter between Mr. Oswald and Mr. Franklin, as the former is not empowered to make propositions, and the latter cannot make any without the concurrence of his colleagues."

He then told me, that nothing in his judgment could be clearer, more satisfactory and convincing, than the reasonings in that paper; that he would do his utmost to impress Lord Shelburne with them; that, as his memory might not do them justice, and it would be impossible for him to express them so well, or state them so clearly as I had written them, he begged I would let him take the paper with him, assuring me that he would return it safely into my hands. I at length complied with this request also. We parted exceeding good friends, and he set out for London.

By the first opportunity after his departure, I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams, and sent the papers therein mentioned, that he might fully be apprized of the proceedings. I omitted only the paper of *Notes for Conversation* with Mr. Oswald, but gave the substance, as appears in the letter. The reason of my omitting it was, that, on reflection, I was not pleased with my having hinted a reparation to Tories for their forfeited estates, and I was a little ashamed of my weakness in permitting the paper to go out of my hands.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

"Passy, 20 April, 1782.

"SIR,

"I hope your Excellency received the copy of our instructions, which I sent by the courier from Versailles, some weeks since. I wrote to you on the 13th, to go by Captain Smedley, and sent a packet of correspondence with Mr. Hartley. Smedley did not leave Paris so soon as I expected; but you should have it by this time.

"With this I send a fresh correspondence, which I have been drawn into, viz. 1st, A letter I sent to Lord Shelburne before he was a minister. 2dly, His answer since he was a minister, by Mr. Oswald. 3dly, A letter from Mr. Laurens. 4thly, My letter to M. de Vergennes. 5thly, My answer to Lord Shelburne. 6thly, My answer to Mr. Laurens. 7thly, Copy of Digges's report. These papers will inform you pretty well of what passed between me and Mr. Oswald, except that in a conversation at parting, I mentioned to him, that I observed they spoke much in England of obtaining a *reconciliation* with the colonies; that this was more than a peace; that the latter might possibly be obtained without the former; that the cruel injuries constantly done us by burning our towns, &c. had made deep impressions of resentment, that would long remain; that much of the advantage to the commerce of England from a peace would depend on a *reconciliation*; that the peace without reconciliation would probably not be durable; that after a quarrel between friends, nothing tended so much to *conciliate*, as offers made by the aggressor of reparation for injuries done by him in his passion. And I hinted, that, if England should make us a voluntary offer of

Canada, expressly for that purpose, it might have a good effect.

"Mr. Oswald liked much the idea, and said they were too much straitened for money to make us pecuniary reparation, but he should endeavour to persuade their doing it this way. He is furnished with a passport to go and return by Calais, and I expect him back in ten or twelve days. I wish you and Mr. Laurens could be here when he arrives, for I shall much want your advice, and cannot act without your concurrence. If the present crisis of your affairs prevents your coming, I hope, at least, Mr. Laurens will be here, and we must communicate with you by expresses, for your letters to me by post are generally opened. I shall write by the next post, requesting Mr. Jay to be here also as soon as possible.

"I received your letter advising of your draft on me for a quarter's salary, which will be duly honored. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. Franklin."

Supposing Mr. Laurens to be in Holland with Mr. Adams, I, at the same time, wrote to him the following letter.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

"Passy, 20 April, 1782.

"Sir,

"I received, by Mr. Oswald, the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 7th instant. He brought me also a letter from Lord Shelburne, which gave him the same good character that you do, adding, 'He is fully apprized of my mind, and you may give full credit to every thing he assures you of.' Mr. Oswald, however, could give me no other particulars of his Lordship's mind, but that he was sincerely dis-

posed to peace. As the message seemed, therefore, rather intended to procure or receive propositions than to make any, I told Mr. Oswald that I could make none but in concurrence with my colleagues in the commission, and that, if we were together, we should not treat but in conjunction with France; and I proposed introducing him to M. de Vergennes, which he accepted.

"He made to that minister the same declaration of the disposition of England to peace; who replied, that France had assuredly the same good disposition; that a treaty might be immediately begun, but it must be for a *general*, not a *particular* peace. That, as to the place, he thought Paris might be the most convenient, as Spain had here already an ambassador, and the American Commissioners could easily be assembled here; this, upon a supposition of the parties treating directly with each other without the intervention of mediators; but, if the mediation was to be used, it might be at Vienna. The King, his master, however, was so truly disposed to peace, that he would agree to any place that the King of England should choose, and would, at the treaty, give proof of the confidence that might be placed in any engagements he should then enter into, by the fidelity and exactitude with which he should observe those he already had with his present allies.

"Mr. Oswald is returned with these general answers by the way of Calais, and expects to be here again in a few days. I wish it might be convenient for you and Mr. Adams to be here at the same time; but, if the present critical situation of affairs there, makes his being in Holland necessary just now, I hope you may, nevertheless, be here, bringing with you his opinion and advice. I have proposed to Lord Shelburne to

discharge you from the obligations you entered into at the time of your enlargement, that you may act more freely in the treaty he desires.

"I had done myself the honor of writing to you a few days before the arrival of Mr. Oswald. My letter went by Mr. Young, your secretary, and enclosed a copy of your commission, with an offer of money if you had occasion for any. Hoping that you will not return to England before you have been at Paris, I forbear enlarging on the state of our affairs here and in Spain. M. de Vergennes told me, he should be very glad to see you here. I found Mr. Oswald to answer perfectly the character you gave me of him, and was much pleased with him. I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

Just after I had despatched these letters, I received the following from Mr. Adams.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Amsterdam, 16 April, 1782.

"SIR,

"Yesterday noon, Mr. William Vaughan, of London, came to my house with Mr. Laurens, the son of the president, and brought me a line from the latter, and told me the President was at Haerlem, and desired to see me. I went to Haerlem and found my old friend at the *Golden Lion*. He told me, he was come partly for his health and the pleasure of seeing me, and partly to converse with me, and see if he had at present just ideas and views of things, at least to see if we agreed in sentiment, having been desired by several of the new ministry to do so. I asked him if he was at liberty? He said, No; that he was

still under parole, but at liberty to say what he pleased to me. I told him, that I could not communicate to him, being a prisoner, even his own instructions, nor enter into any consultation with him as one of our colleagues in the commission for peace; that all I should say to him would be as one private citizen conversing with another; but that, upon all such occasions, I should reserve a right to communicate whatever should pass to our colleagues and allies.

"He said, that Lord Shelburne, and others of the new ministers, were anxious to know, whether there was any authority to treat of a separate peace, and whether there could be an accommodation upon any terms short of independence; that he had ever answered them, that nothing short of an express or tacit acknowledgment of our independence, in his opinion, would ever be accepted, and that no treaty ever would, or could, be made separate from France. He asked me, if his answers had been right. I told him, that I was fully of that opinion. He said, that the new ministers had received Digges's report, but his character was such, that they did not choose to depend upon it; that a person by the name of Oswald, I think, set off for Paris to see you, about the same time he came away to see me.

"I desired him, between him and me, to consider, without saying any thing of it to the ministry, whether we could ever have a real peace, with Canada or Nova Scotia in the hands of the English; and whether we ought not to insist, at least, upon a stipulation, that they should keep no standing army, or regular troops, nor erect any fortifications, upon the frontiers of either. That, at present, I saw no motive that we had to be anxious for a peace; and, if the nation

was not ripe for it upon proper terms, we might wait patiently till they should be so.

"I found the old gentleman perfectly sound in his system of politics. He has a very poor opinion, both of the integrity and abilities of the new ministry, as well as the old. He thinks they know not what they are about; that they are spoiled by the same insincerity, duplicity, falsehood, and corruption, with the former. Lord Shelburne still flatters the King with ideas of conciliation and a separate peace, &c.; yet the nation, and the best men in it, are for universal peace and an express acknowledgment of American independence, and many of the best are for giving up Canada and Nova Scotia. His design seemed to be solely to know how far Digges's report was true. After an hour or two of conversation, I returned to Amsterdam, and left him to return to London.

"These are all but artifices to raise the stocks; and, if you think of any method to put a stop to them, I will cheerfully concur with you. They now know sufficiently, that our commission is to treat of a general peace, and with persons vested with equal powers; and, if you agree to it, I will, never to see another messenger that is not a plenipotentiary.

"It is expected that the seventh Province, Guelderland, will this day acknowledge American independence. I think we are in such a situation now, that we ought not, upon any consideration, to think of a truce, or any thing short of an express acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the United States. I should be glad, however, to know your sentiments upon this point. I have the honor to be, &c.

"JOHN ADAMS."

To the above, I immediately wrote the following answer.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

"Passy, 20 April, 1782.

"SIR,

"I have just received the honor of yours, dated the 16th instant, acquainting me with the interview between your Excellency and Mr. Laurens. I am glad to learn, that his political sentiments coincide with ours, and that there is a disposition in England to give us up Canada and Nova Scotia.

"I like your idea of seeing no more messengers, that are not plenipotentiaries; but I cannot refuse seeing again Mr. Oswald, as the minister here considered the letter to me from Lord Shelburne as a kind of authentication given that messenger, and expects his return with some explicit propositions. I shall keep you advised of whatever passes.

"The late act of Parliament, for exchanging American prisoners *as prisoners of war*, according to the law of nations, *any thing in their commitments notwithstanding*, seems to me a renunciation of their pretensions to try our people as subjects guilty of high treason, and to be a kind of tacit acknowledgment of our independency. Having taken this step, it will be less difficult for them to acknowledge it expressly. They are now preparing transports to send the prisoners home. I yesterday sent the passports desired of me.

"Sir George Grand shows me a letter from Mr. Fizeau, in which he says, that, if advantage is taken of the present enthusiasm in favor of America, a loan might be obtained in Holland, of five or six millions of florins, for America, and, if their house is empowered to open it, he has no doubt of success; but that no time is to be lost. I earnestly recommend this

matter to you, as extremely necessary to the operations of our financier, Mr. Morris, who, not knowing that the greatest part of the last five millions had been consumed by purchase of goods, &c., in Europe, writes me advice of large drafts, that he shall be obliged to make upon me this summer.

"This court has granted us six millions of livres for the current year; but it will fall vastly short of our occasions, there being large orders to fulfil, and near two millions and a half to pay M. Beaumarchais, besides the interest, bills, &c. The house of Fizeau and Grand is now appointed banker for France, by a special commission from the King, and will, on that, as well as other accounts, be, in my opinion, the fittest for this operation. Your Excellency being on the spot, can better judge of the terms, &c., and manage with that house the whole business, in which I should be glad to have no other concern than that of receiving assistance from it, when pressed by the dreaded drafts. With great respect, I am, Sir, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

In reply to this, Mr. Adams wrote to me as follows.

FROM JOHN ADAMS TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Amsterdam, 2 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I am honored with your favor of the 20th of April, and Mr. Laurens's son proposes to carry the letter to his father forthwith. The instructions by the courier from Versailles came safe, as all other despatches by that channel no doubt will do. The correspondence with Mr. Hartley I received by Captain Smedley, and will take the first good opportunity by a private hand to return it, as well as that with the Earl of Shelburne.

"Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay will, I hope, be able to meet at Paris; but when it will be in my power to go, I know not. Your present negotiation about peace falls in very well to aid a proposition, which I am instructed to make, as soon as the court of Versailles shall judge proper, of a triple or quadruple alliance. This matter, the treaty of commerce, which is now under deliberation, and the loan, will render it improper for me to quit this station, unless in case of necessity. If there is a real disposition to permit Canada to accede to the American association, I should think there would be no great difficulty in adjusting all things between England and America, provided our allies are contented too. In a former letter I hinted, that I thought an express acknowledgment of our independence might now be insisted on; but I did not mean, that we should insist upon such an article in the treaty. If they make a treaty of peace with the United States of America, this is acknowledgment enough for me.

"The affair of a loan gives me much anxiety and fatigue. It is true, I may open a loan for five millions; but I confess, I have no hopes of obtaining so much. The money is not to be had. Cash is not infinite in this country. Their profits by trade have been ruined for two or three years; and there are loans open for France, Spain, England, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, and several other powers, as well as their own national, provincial, and collegiate loans. The undertakers are already loaded with burdens greater than they can bear; and all the brokers in the republic are so engaged, that there is scarcely a ducat to be lent, but what is promised.

"This is the true cause why we should not succeed; yet they will seek a hundred other pretences. It is considered such an honor and such an introduction to American trade to be the house, that the eagerness to

obtain the title of American banker is prodigious. Various houses have pretensions, which they set up very high; and, let me choose which I will, I am sure of a cry and clamor.

"I have taken some measures to endeavour to calm the heat, and give general satisfaction, but have as yet small hopes of success. I would strike with any house that would insure the money, but none will undertake it, now it is offered, although several were very ready to affirm that they could, when it began to be talked of. Upon inquiry, they do not find the money easy to obtain, which I could have told them before. It is to me, personally, perfectly indifferent which is the house; and the only question is, which will be able to do best for the interests of the United States. This question, however simple, is not easy to answer. But I think it clear, after very painful and laborious inquiry for a year and a half, that no house whatever will be able to do much. Enthusiasm, at some times and in some countries, may do a great deal; but there has as yet been no enthusiasm in this country for America, strong enough to untie many purses. Another year, if the war continues, perhaps we may do better. I have the honor to be, &c.

"JOHN ADAMS."

During Mr. Oswald's absence, I received the following from Mr. Laurens.

FROM HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

"London, 20 April, 1782.

"SIR,

"I wrote to you on the 7th instant, by Mr. Oswald, since which, that is to say, on the 28th, I was honored by the receipt of your letter of the 12th, enclosing a copy of the commission for treating for peace,

by the hands of Mr. Young. The recognizance, exacted from me by the late ministry, has been vacated and done away by the present; these have been pleased to enlarge me without formal conditions; but, as I would not consent that the United States of America should be outdone in generosity, however late the marks appeared on this side, I took upon me to assure Lord Shelburne, in a letter of acknowledgment for the part, which his Lordship had taken for obtaining my release, that Congress would not fail to make a just and adequate return. The only return, in my view, is Lieutenant-General Lord Cornwallis. Congress were pleased some time ago, to offer a British lieutenant-general for my ransom; and, as I am informed a special exchange of Lord Cornwallis for the same object was lately in contemplation, it would afford me very great satisfaction to know, that you will join me in cancelling the debt of honor, which we have impliedly incurred, by discharging his Lordship from the obligations of his parole.

"For my own part, though not a bold adventurer, I think I shall not commit myself to the risk of censure, by acting conjunctly with you in such a bargain. I entreat you, Sir, at least, to reflect on this matter; I shall take the liberty of requesting your determination when I reach the continent, which will probably happen in a few days.

"Lord Cornwallis, in a late conversation with me, put the following case. 'Suppose,' said his Lordship, 'it shall have been agreed, in America, that Lord Cornwallis should be offered in exchange for Mr. Laurens, don't you think, although you are now discharged, I ought to reap the intended benefit?' A reply from the feelings of the heart, as I love fair play, was prompt; 'Undoubtedly, my Lord, you ought to be, and shall

be, in such case, discharged, and I will venture to take the burden upon myself.' Certain legal forms, I apprehend, rendered the discharge of me, without condition, unavoidable; but I had previously refused to accept of myself for nothing, and what I now aim at was understood as an adequate return; it is not to be doubted, his Lordship's question was built on this ground.

"I had uniformly and explicitly declared to the people here, people in the first rank of importance, that nothing short of independence, in terms of our treaty of alliance, would induce America to treat for truce or peace, and that no treaty could be had without the consent of our ally first obtained; in a word, if you mean to have peace, you must seek for a general peace. The doctrine was ill relished, especially by those whose power only could set the machine in motion; but having, since my return from Haerlem, asserted, in very positive terms, that I was confirmed in my former opinions, the late obduracy has been more than a little softened, as you will soon learn from the worthy friend, by whom I addressed you on the 7th, who two days ago set out on his return to Passy and Versailles, with, I believe, a more permanent commission than the former.

"Accept my thanks, Sir, for the kind offer of a supply of money. I know too well how much you have been harassed for that article, and too well, how low our American finances in Europe are; therefore, if I can possibly avoid it, I will not further trouble you, nor impoverish them, or not till the last extremity. Hitherto I have supported myself without borrowing from anybody, and I am determined to continue living upon my own stock while it lasts; the stock is indeed small; my expenses have been and shall be in a suitable,

modest style. I pray God to bless you. I have the honor to be, &c. "HENRY LAURENS."

"P. S. I judged it proper, not only to show the peace commission to Lord Shelburne, but to give his Lordship a copy of it, from an opinion that it would work no evil, being shown elsewhere."

On the 4th of May, Mr. Oswald returned, and brought me the following letter from Lord Shelburne.

FROM LORD SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Shelburne House, 20 April, 1782.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have received much satisfaction in being assured by you, that the qualifications of wisdom and integrity, which induced me to make choice of Mr. Oswald as the fittest instrument for the renewal of our friendly intercourse, have also recommended him so effectually to your approbation and esteem. I most heartily wish the influence of this first communication of our mutual sentiments may be extended to a happy conclusion of all our public differences.

"The candor with which the Count de Vergennes expresses his Most Christian Majesty's sentiments and wishes, on the subject of a speedy pacification, is a pleasing omen of its accomplishment. His Majesty is not less decided in the same sentiments and wishes, and it confirms his Majesty's ministers in their intention to act in like manner, as most consonant to the true dignity of a great nation. In consequence of these reciprocal advances, Mr. Oswald is sent back to Paris, for the purpose of arranging and settling with you the preliminaries of time and place; and I have the pleasure to tell you, that Mr. Laurens is already dis-

charged from those engagements, which he entered into when he was admitted to bail.

"It is also determined, that Mr. Fox, from whose department that communication is necessarily to proceed, shall send a proper person, who may confer and settle immediately with the Count de Vergennes the further measures and proceedings, which may be judged proper to adopt toward advancing the prosecution of this important business.

"In the mean time, Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to you my thoughts upon the principal objects to be settled. Transports are actually preparing for the purpose of conveying your prisoners to America, to be there exchanged; and we trust, that you will learn, that due attention has not been wanting to their accommodation and good treatment.

"I have the honor to be, with very sincere respect, dear Sir, your very faithful and obedient humble servant, SHELBURNE."

Having read the letter, I mentioned to Mr. Oswald the part, which refers me to him for his Lordship's sentiments. He acquainted me, that they were very sincerely disposed to peace; that the whole ministry concurred in the same disposition; that a good deal of confidence was placed in my character for open, honest dealing; that it was also generally believed, I had still remaining some part of my ancient affection and regard for Old England, and it was hoped it might appear on this occasion. He then showed me an extract from the minutes of Council, but did not leave the paper with me. As well as I can remember, it was to this purpose.

"At a Cabinet Council, held April 27th, 1782, Present, Lord Rockingham, Lord Chancellor, Lord Presi-

dent, Lord Camden, &c. &c., to the number of fifteen or twenty, being all ministers, and great officers of State,

"It was proposed to represent to his Majesty, that it would be well for Mr. Oswald to return to Doctor Franklin and acquaint him, that it is agreed to treat for a general peace, and at Paris; and that the principal points in contemplation are, the allowing of American Independence, on condition that England be put into the same situation, that she was left in by the peace of 1763."

Mr. Oswald also informed me, that he had conversed with Lord Shelburne on the subject of my paper of *Notes*, relating to reconciliation. That he had shown him the paper, and had been prevailed on to leave it with him a night; but it was on his Lordship's solemn promise of returning it, which had been complied with, and he now returned it to me. That it seemed to have made an impression, and he had reason to believe that matter might be settled to our satisfaction towards the end of the treaty; but in his own mind he wished it might not be mentioned at the beginning. That his Lordship indeed said, he had not imagined reparation would be expected, and he wondered I should not know whether it was intended to demand it. Finally, Mr. Oswald acquainted me, that, as the business now likely to be brought forward more particularly appertained to the department of the other Secretary, Mr. Fox, he was directed to announce another agent coming from that department, who might be expected every day, viz. the honorable Mr. Grenville, brother to Lord Temple, and son of the famous Mr. George Grenville, formerly Chancellor of the Exchequer. I immediately wrote the following note to the Count de Vergennes.

TO THE COUNT DE VERGENNES.

"Passy, 4 May, 1782.

"Sir,

"I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency, that Mr. Oswald is just returned from London, and is now with me. He has delivered me a letter from Lord Shelburne, which I enclose for your perusal, together with a copy of my letter, to which it is an answer. He tells me, that it has been agreed in Council to treat at Paris, and to treat of a *general peace;* and that, as it is more particularly in the department of Mr. Fox to regulate the circumstantials, a gentleman, Mr. Grenville, to be sent by him for that purpose, may be daily expected here. Mr. Oswald will wait on your Excellency whenever you shall think fit to receive him. I am, with respect, &c.

"B. Franklin."

And the next day I received the following answer.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

"Versailles, 5 May, 1782.

"Sir,

"I have received the letter, which you did me the honor to write to me the 4th instant, as also those which accompanied it. I will see you with your friend, with pleasure, at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning. I have the honor to be, &c.

"De Vergennes."

Accordingly, on Monday morning I went with Mr. Oswald to Versailles, and we saw the minister. Mr. Oswald acquainted him with the disposition of his Court to treat for a general peace, and at Paris; and

he announced Mr. Grenville, who, he said, was to set out about the same time with him, but, as he would probably come by the way of Ostend, might be a few days longer on the road. Some general conversation passed, agreeable enough, but not of importance.

In our return, Mr. Oswald repeated to me his opinion, that the affair of Canada would be settled to our satisfaction, and his wish that it might not be mentioned, till towards the end of the treaty. He intimated, too, that it was apprehended, the greatest obstructions in the treaty might come from the part of Spain; but said, if she was unreasonable, there were means to bring her to reason. That Russia was a friend to England, had lately made great discoveries on the back of North America, could make establishments there, and might easily transport an army from Kamschatka to the coast of Mexico, and conquer all those countries. This appeared a little visionary, at present; but I did not dispute it.

On the whole, I was able to draw so little from Mr. Oswald of the sentiments of Lord Shelburne, who had mentioned him as intrusted with the communication of them, that I could not but wonder at his being sent again to me, especially as Mr. Grenville was so soon to follow.

On Tuesday I was at Court, as usual on that day. M. de Vergennes asked me, if Mr. Oswald had not opened himself further to me? I acquainted him with the sight I had had of the minute of Council, and of the loose expressions contained in it, of what was in contemplation. He seemed to think it odd, that he had brought nothing more explicit. I supposed Mr. Grenville might be better furnished. The next morning I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

"Passy, 8 May, 1782.

"Sir,

"Mr. Oswald, whom I mentioned in a former letter, which I find you have received, is returned, and brought me another letter from Lord Shelburne, of which the above is a copy. It says, Mr. Oswald is instructed to communicate to me his Lordship's thoughts. He is, however, very sparing of such communication. All I have got from him is, that the ministry have in contemplation the allowing independence to America, on condition of Britain being put again into the state she was left in by the peace of 1763, which I suppose means being put again in the possession of the islands, which France has taken from her. This seems to me a proposition of selling to us a thing, that was already our own, and making France pay the price they are pleased to ask for it.

"Mr. Grenville, who is sent by Mr. Fox, is expected here daily. Mr. Oswald tells me, that Mr. Laurens will soon be here also. Yours of the 2d instant is just come to hand. I shall write to you on this affair hereafter, by the court couriers; for I am certain, that your letters to me are opened at the postoffice, either here or in Holland, and I suppose that mine to you are treated in the same manner. I enclose the cover of your last, that you may see the seal. With great respect, I am, Sir, &c.

"B. Franklin."

I had but just sent away this letter, when Mr. Oswald came in, bringing with him Mr. Grenville, who was just arrived. He gave me the following letter from Mr. Secretary Fox.

FROM CHARLES J. FOX TO B. FRANKLIN.

"St. James's, 1 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"Though Mr. Oswald will, no doubt, have informed you of the nature of Mr. Grenville's commission, yet I cannot refrain from making use of the opportunity, that his going offers me, to assure you of the esteem and respect, which I have borne to your character, and to beg you to believe, that no change in my situation has made any in those ardent wishes for reconciliation, which I have invariably felt from the very beginning of this unhappy contest.

"Mr. Grenville is fully acquainted with my sentiments upon this subject, and with the sanguine hopes, which I have conceived, that those with whom we are contending are too reasonable to continue a contest, which has no longer any object, either real or even imaginary. I know your liberality of mind too well to be afraid, lest any prejudices against Mr. Grenville's *name* may prevent you from esteeming those excellent qualities of heart and head, which belong to him, or from giving the fullest credit to the sincerity of his wishes for peace, in which no man in either country goes beyond him. I am, with great truth and regard, &c. C. J. Fox."

I imagined the gentleman had been at Versailles, as I supposed Mr. Grenville would first have waited on M. de Vergennes before he called on me. But finding, in conversation, that he had not, and that he expected me to introduce him, I immediately wrote to that minister, acquainting him, that Mr. Grenville was arrived, and desired to know when his Excellency would think fit to receive him, and I sent an express with my letter.

I then entered into conversation with him on the subject of his mission, Mr. Fox having referred me to him, as being fully acquainted with his sentiments. He said, that peace was really wished for by everybody, if it could be obtained on reasonable terms; and, as the idea of subjugating America was given up, and both France and America had thereby obtained what they had in view originally, it was hoped, that there now remained no obstacle to a pacification. That England was willing to treat of a general peace with all the powers at war against her, and that the treaty should be at Paris.

I did not press him much for further particulars, supposing they were reserved for our interview with M. de Vergennes. The gentlemen did me the honor of staying to dinner with me, on the supposition, which I urged, that my express might be back before we parted. This gave me an opportunity of a good deal of general conversation with Mr. Grenville, who appeared to me a sensible, judicious, intelligent, good-tempered, and well-instructed young man, answering well the character Mr. Fox had given me of him.

They left me, however, about six o'clock, and my messenger did not return till near nine. He brought me the answer of the Count de Vergennes, that he was glad to hear of Mr. Grenville's arrival, and would be ready to receive us to-morrow, at half past ten or eleven o'clock. I immediately enclosed his note in one to Mr. Grenville, requesting him to be with me at Passy by eight, that we might have time to breakfast before we set out. I have preserved no copy of these three last-mentioned notes, or I should have inserted them, as I think, that, though they seem of almost too trifling a nature, they serve usefully sometimes to settle dates, authenticate facts, and show something of the turn

and manner of thinking of the writers on particular occasions. The answer I received was as follows.

"Mr. Grenville presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will certainly do himself the honor of waiting upon Mr. Franklin to-morrow morning at eight o'clock.

"*Rue de Richelieu, Wednesday night.*"

We set out accordingly the next morning in my coach, and arrived punctually at Count de Vergennes's, who received Mr. Grenville in the most cordial manner, on account of the acquaintance and friendship, that had formerly subsisted between his uncle and the Count de Vergennes, when they were ambassadors together at Constantinople.

After some little agreeable conversation, Mr. Grenville presented his letters from Mr. Secretary Fox, and, I think, from the Duke of Richmond. When these were read, the subject of peace was entered upon. What my memory retains of the discourse amounts to little more than this, that, after mutual declarations of the good dispositions of the two courts, Mr. Grenville having intimated, that, in case England gave America independence, France, it was expected, would restore the conquests she had made of British islands, receiving back those of Miquelon and St. Pierre. And, the original object of the war being obtained, it was supposed that France would be contented with that. The minister seemed to smile at the proposed exchange, and remarked, the offer of giving independence to America amounted to little. "America," said he, "does not ask it of you; there is Mr. Franklin, he will answer you as to that point." "To be sure," I said, "we do not consider ourselves as under any necessity

of bargaining for a thing that is our own, which we have bought at the expense of much blood and treasure, and which we are in possession of." "As to our being satisfied with the original object of the war," continued he, "look back to the conduct of your nation in former wars. In the last war, for example, what was the object? It was the disputed right of some waste lands on the Ohio and the frontiers of Nova Scotia. Did you content yourselves with the recovery of those lands? No, you retained at the peace all Canada, all Louisiana, all Florida, Grenada, and other West India islands, the greatest part of the northern fisheries, with all your conquests in Africa and the East Indies." Something being mentioned of its not being reasonable, that a nation, after making an unprovoked and unsuccessful war upon its neighbours, should expect to sit down whole, and have every thing restored, which she had lost in such a war, I think Mr. Grenville remarked, the war had been provoked by the encouragement given by France to the Americans to revolt. On which the Count de Vergennes grew a little warm, and declared firmly, that the breach was made, and our independence declared, long before we received the least encouragement from France; and he defied the world to give the smallest proof of the contrary. "There sits," said he, "Mr. Franklin, who knows the fact, and can contradict me if I do not speak the truth."

He repeated to Mr. Grenville, what he had before said to Mr. Oswald, respecting the King's intention of treating fairly, and keeping faithfully the conventions he should enter into, of which disposition he should give at the treaty convincing proofs by the fidelity and exactitude, with which he should observe his engagements with his present allies, and added, that the

points which the King had chiefly in view were *justice* and *dignity;* these he could not depart from. He acquainted Mr. Grenville, that he should immediately write to Spain and Holland, communicate to those courts what had passed, and request their answers; that, in the mean time, he hoped Mr. Grenville would find means of amusing himself agreeably, to which he should be glad to contribute; that he would communicate what had passed to the King, and he invited him to come again the next day.

On our return, Mr. Grenville expressed himself as not quite satisfied with some part of the Count de Vergennes's discourse, and was thoughtful. He told me, that he had brought two State messengers with him, and perhaps, after he had had another interview with the minister, he might despatch one of them to London. I then requested leave to answer, by that opportunity, the letters I had received from Lord Shelburne and Mr. Fox, and he kindly promised to acquaint me in time of the messenger's departure. He did not ask me to go with him the next day to Versailles, and I did not offer it.

The coming and going of these gentlemen were observed, and made much talk at Paris; and the Marquis de Lafayette, having learned something of their business from the minister, discoursed with me about it. Agreeably to the resolutions of Congress, directing me to confer with him, and take his assistance in our affairs, I communicated to him what had passed. He told me, that, during the treaty at Paris for the last peace, the Duke de Nivernais had been sent to reside in London, that this court might, through him, state what was from time to time transacted in the light they thought best, to prevent misrepresentations and misunderstandings. That such an employ would be

extremely agreeable to him on many accounts; that as he was now an American citizen, spoke both languages, and was well acquainted with our interests, he believed he might be useful in it; and that, as peace was likely from appearances to take place, his return to America was perhaps not so immediately necessary. I liked the idea, and encouraged his proposing it to the ministry. He then wished I would make him acquainted with Messrs. Oswald and Grenville, and for that end proposed meeting them at breakfast with me, which I promised to contrive if I could, and endeavour to engage them for Saturday.

Friday morning, the 10th of May, I went to Paris, and visited Mr. Oswald. I found him in the same friendly dispositions, and very desirous of good, and seeing an end put to this ruinous war. But I got no further sight as to the sentiments of Lord Shelburne respecting the terms. I told him, the Marquis de Lafayette would breakfast with me to-morrow, and as he, Mr. Oswald, might have some curiosity to see a person who had in this war rendered himself so remarkable, I proposed his doing me the same honor. He agreed to it cheerfully. I came home intending to write to Mr. Grenville, who I supposed might stay and dine at Versailles, and therefore did not call on him. But he was returned, and I found the following note from him.

"Paris, 10 May.

"Mr. Grenville presents his compliments to Mr Franklin; he proposes sending a courier to England at ten o'clock to-night, and will give him in charge any letters Mr. Franklin may wish to send by him."

I sat down immediately, and wrote the two short letters following to the secretaries of state.

TO CHARLES J. FOX.

"Passy, 10 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Grenville, whom I find to be a sensible, judicious, and amiable gentleman. The name, I assure you, does not with me lessen the regard his excellent qualities inspire. I introduced him as soon as possible to Count de Vergennes; he will himself give you an account of his reception. I hope his coming may forward the blessed work of pacification, in which, for the sake of humanity, no time should be lost, no reasonable cause as you observe existing at present for the continuance of this abominable war. Be assured of my endeavours to put an end to it.

"I am much flattered by the good opinion of a person I have long highly esteemed, and I hope it will not be lessened by my conduct in the affair, that has given rise to our correspondence. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

TO LORD SHELBURNE.

"Passy, 10 May, 1782.

"MY LORD,

"I have received the honor of your Lordship's letter, dated the 28th past, by Mr. Oswald, informing me, that he is sent back to settle with me the preliminaries of time and place. Paris, as the place, seemed to me yesterday to be agreed on, between Mr. Grenville and M. de Vergennes, and is perfectly agreeable to me. The time cannot well be settled till this court has received answers from Madrid, and the Hague, and until my colleagues are arrived. I expect daily

Messrs. Jay and Laurens. Mr. Adams doubts whether he can be here, but that will not hinder our proceeding.

"It gave me great pleasure to hear Mr. Laurens is discharged entirely from the obligations he had entered into. I am much obliged by the readiness with which your Lordship has conferred that favor. Please to accept my thankful acknowledgments.

"I am happy too, in understanding from your letter, that transports are actually preparing to convey our prisoners to America, and that attention will be paid to their accommodation and good treatment. Those people on their return will be dispersed through every part of America, and the accounts they will have to give of any marks of kindness received by them under the present ministry, will lessen much the resentment of their friends against the nation, for the hardships they suffered under the *past*.

"Mr. Oswald rests here awhile by my advice, as I think his presence likely to be useful. With great, and sincere respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

And I sent them to Mr. Grenville with the following note.

"Mr. Franklin presents his compliments to Mr. Grenville, and thanks him for the information of his courier's departure, and his kind offer of forwarding Mr. Franklin's letter; he accepts the favor and encloses two.

"The Marquis de Lafayette and Mr. Oswald will do Mr. Franklin the honor of breakfasting with him to-morrow, between nine and ten o'clock. Mr. Franklin will also be happy to have the company of Mr. Grenville if agreeable to him. He should have waited

upon Mr. Grenville to-day at Paris, but he imagined Mr. Grenville was at Versailles.

"*Passy, Friday evening, May 10th.*"

To which Mr. Grenville sent me this answer.

"Mr. Grenville presents his compliments to Mr. Franklin, and will, with great pleasure, do himself the honor of breakfasting with Mr. Franklin to-morrow between nine and ten o'clock. Mr. Grenville was at Versailles to-day, and should have been sorry if Mr. Franklin should have given himself the trouble of calling at Paris this morning. The courier shall certainly take particular care of Mr. Franklin's letters.

"*Paris, Friday, May 10th.*"

The gentlemen all met accordingly, had a good deal of conversation at and after breakfast, stayed till after one o'clock, and parted much pleased with each other.

The Monday following, I called to visit Mr. Grenville. I found with him Mr. Oswald, who told me he was just about returning to London. I was a little surprised at the suddenness of the resolution he had taken, it being, as he said, to set out the next morning early. I conceived the gentleman was engaged in business, so I withdrew, and went to write a few letters, among which was the following to Lord Shelburne, being really concerned at the thought of losing so good a man as Mr. Oswald.

TO LORD SHELBURNE.

"Passy, 13 May, 1782.

"My Lord,

"I did myself the honor of writing to your Lordship a few days since, by Mr. Grenville's courier, acknowledging the receipt of yours of the 28th past, by Mr. Oswald.

"I then hoped that gentleman would have remained here some time, but his affairs, it seems, recall him sooner than he imagined. I hope he will return again, as I esteem him more, the more I am acquainted with him, and believe his moderation, prudent counsels, and sound judgment may contribute much, not only to the speedy conclusion of a peace, but to the framing such a peace as may be firm and lasting. With great respect, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

I went in the evening to Mr. Oswald's lodging with my letters, when he informed me, his intention was to return immediately hither from England; and, to make the more despatch in going and returning, he should leave his carriage at Calais, as the embarking and debarking of carriages in the packet boats often occasioned a tide's delay. I did not inquire the reason of this movement. We had but little conversation, for Mr. Grenville coming in, I soon after wished him a good journey and retired, that I might not interrupt their consultations.

Since his departure, Mr. Grenville has made me a visit; and entered into conversation with me, exactly of the same tenor with the letters I formerly received from Mr. Hartley, stating suppositions that France might insist on points totally different from what had been the object of our alliance, and that, in such case, he should imagine we were not at all bound to continue the war to obtain such points for her, &c. I thought I could not give him a better answer to this kind of discourse, than what I had given in two letters to Mr. Hartley, and, therefore, calling for those letters, I read them to him. He smiled, and would have turned the conversation; but I gave a little more of my sen-

timents on the general subject of benefits, obligation, and gratitude. I said, I thought people had often imperfect notions of their duty on those points, and that a state of obligation was to many so uneasy a state, that they became ingenious in finding out reasons and arguments to prove that they had been laid under no obligation at all, or that they had discharged it, and they too easily satisfied themselves with such arguments.

To explain clearly my ideas on the subject, I stated a case. A, a stranger to B, sees him about to be imprisoned for a debt by a merciless creditor; he lends him the sum necessary to preserve his liberty. B then becomes the debtor of A, and, after some time, repays the money. Has he then discharged the obligation? No. He has discharged the money debt, but the obligation remains, and he is a debtor for the kindness of A, in lending him the sum so seasonably. If B should afterwards find A in the same circumstances, that he, B, had been in when A lent him the money, he may then discharge this obligation or debt of kindness *in part*, by lending him an equal sum. *In part*, I said, and not *wholly*, because, when A lent B the money, there had been no prior benefit received to induce him to it. And, therefore, if A should a second time need the same assistance, I thought B, if in his power, was in duty bound to afford it to him.

Mr. Grenville conceived that it was carrying gratitude very far, to apply this doctrine to our situation in respect to France, who was really the party served and obliged by our separation from England, as it lessened the power of her rival and relatively increased her own.

I told him, I was so strongly impressed with the kind assistance afforded us by France in our distress,

and the generous and noble manner in which it was granted, without exacting or stipulating for a single privilege, or particular advantage to herself in our commerce, or otherwise, that I could never suffer myself to think of such reasonings for lessening the obligation; and I hoped, and, indeed, did not doubt, but my countrymen were all of the same sentiments.

Thus he gained nothing of the point he came to push; we parted, however, in good humor. His conversation is always polite, and his manner pleasing. As he expressed a strong desire to discourse with me on the means of a reconciliation with America, I promised to consider the subject, and appointed Saturday the first day of June, for our conversation, when he proposed to call on me. The same day I received another letter from my old friend, Mr. Hartley. Our former correspondence on the subject of peace since the beginning of this year, I have kept by itself, as it preceded this, was in the time of the old ministry, and consisted wholly of letters unmixed with personal conversation. This being the first letter from him under the new ministry, and as it may be followed by others, which may relate to the negotiation, I insert it here, with my answer, and shall continue to insert the future letters I may receive from him relative to the same subject.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

"London, 3 May, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I write to you only one line, just to inform you, that a general order is issued by our government for the release of all the American prisoners everywhere. I have had this from Lord Shelburne, who informed me, that the order was not partial or conditional; but

general and absolute. I heartily congratulate you upon this first step towards *sweet reconciliation*. I hope other things will follow. I had a long conversation with Lord Shelburne relating to America, in which he expressed himself in most favorable terms. I shall have the honor of seeing and conversing with you again. But at present, as you know, certain matters are depending from your side of the water.

"Mr. Laurens is entirely at liberty. I see him very frequently, and when you see him he will tell you many things from me, which have occurred to me in my poor endeavours to promote the cause of peace. *Da pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris.* Your affectionate, &c. D. HARTLEY."

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

"Passy, 13 May, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I have just received your favor of the 3d instant. I thank you much for the good news you give me, that 'an order is issued by your government for the release of all the American prisoners *everywhere*, an order not *partial* or *conditional*, but *general* and *absolute*.' I rejoice with you in this step, not only on account of the unhappy captives, who by it will be set at liberty and restored to their friends and families, but as I think it will tend greatly towards a reconciliation, on which alone the hope of a durable peace can be founded. I am much indebted to your good brother for a very kind and obliging letter, which was mislaid when it should have been answered. I beg you would present to him my thankful acknowledgments and my very sincere respects. I join with you most heartily in the prayer that ends your letter, *Da*

pacem, Domine, in diebus nostris. I am ever, my friend, yours most affectionately,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Our business standing still at present, till the return of Mr. Oswald, gives me a void, that I may fill up with two or three circumstances, not at present connected with this intended treaty, but which serve to show something of the disposition of courts who have, or may have, a concern in it.

Mr. Jay had written to me, from time to time, of the unaccountable delays he had met with since his residence at the court of Spain, and that he was now no nearer in the business he had been charged with, than when he first arrived. Upon the first coming of Mr. Oswald, and the apparent prospect of a treaty, I wrote to press his coming hither, and, being a little out of humor with that court, I said, they have taken four years to consider whether they should treat with us, give them forty, and let us mind our own business: and I sent the letter under cover to a person at Madrid, who I hoped would open and read it.

It seems to me, that we have, in most instances, hurt our credit and importance, by sending all over Europe, begging alliances, and soliciting declarations of our independence. The nations, perhaps, from thence seemed to think, that our independence is something they have to sell, and that we do not offer enough for it. Mr. Adams has succeeded in Holland, owing to their war with England, and a good deal to the late votes in the Commons towards a reconciliation; but the ministers of the other powers refused, as I hear, to return his visits, because our independence was not yet acknowledged by their courts. I had heard here, by good luck, that the same resolution

was taken by several of them not to return the visits I should make them (as they supposed) when I was first received here as minister plenipotentiary, and disappointed their project by visiting none of them. In my private opinion, the first civility is due from the old resident to the stranger and new comer. My opinion indeed is good for nothing against custom, which I should have obeyed, but for the circumstances, that rendered it more prudent to avoid disputes and affronts, though at the hazard of being thought rude or singular.

While I am writing, something ridiculous enough on this head has happened to me. The Count du Nord, who is son of the Empress of Russia, arriving at Paris, ordered, it seems, cards of visit to be sent to all the foreign ministers. One of them, on which was written, "*Le Comte du Nord et le Prince Bariatinski,*" was brought to me. It was on Monday evening last. Being at court the next day, I inquired of an old minister, my friend, what was the etiquette, and whether the Count received visits. The answer was, "*Non; on se fait écrire; voilà tout.*" This is done by passing the door, and ordering your name to be written on the porter's book. Accordingly, on Wednesday I passed the house of Prince Bariatinski, ambassador of Russia, where the Count lodged, and left my name on the list of each. I thought no more of the matter; but this day, May the 24th, comes the servant who brought the card, in great affliction, saying he was like to be ruined by his mistake in bringing the card here, and wishing to obtain from me some paper, of I know not what kind, for I did not see him.

In the afternoon came my friend, M. Le Roy, who is also a friend of the Prince's, telling me how much he, the Prince, was concerned at the accident, that

both himself and the Count had great personal regard for me and my character, but that, our independence not yet being acknowledged by the court of Russia, it was impossible for him to permit himself to make me a visit as minister. I told M. Le Roy it was not my custom to seek such honors, though I was very sensible of them when conferred upon me; that I should not have voluntarily intruded a visit, and that, in this case, I had only done what I was informed the etiquette required of me; but if it would be attended with any inconvenience to Prince Bariatinski, whom I much esteemed and respected, I thought the remedy was easy; he had only to erase my name out of his book of visits received, and I would burn their card.

All the northern princes are not ashamed of a little civility committed towards an American. The King of Denmark, travelling in England under an assumed name, sent me a card, expressing in strong terms his esteem for me, and inviting me to dinner with him at St. James's. And the ambassador from the King of Sweden lately asked me, whether I had powers to make a treaty of commerce with their kingdom, for, he said, his master was desirous of such a treaty with the United States, had directed him to ask me the question, and had charged him to tell me, that it would flatter him greatly to make it with a person whose character he so much esteemed, &c. Such compliments might make me a little proud, if we Americans were not naturally as much so already as the porter, who, being told he had with his burden jostled the Great Czar, Peter, then in London, walking the street; "*Poh!*" says he, "*we are all Czars here.*"

I did not write by Mr. Oswald to Mr. Laurens, because, from some expressions in his last to me, I ex-

pected him here, and I desired Mr. Oswald, if he found him still in London, or met him on the road, to give him that reason. I am disappointed in my expectation, for I have now received (May 25th) the following letter from him.

FROM HENRY LAURENS TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Ostend, 17 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I had the honor of addressing you on the 30th ultimo by post, a duplicate of which will accompany this, in order to guard against the effect of a miscarriage in the first instance, and I beg leave to refer you to the contents.

"On the 10th current and no sooner, your very obliging favor of the 20th preceding reached me in London. Being then on the point of leaving that place, I deferred a reply until my arrival on this side. This happened yesterday, too late to catch the post of the day, except by a single letter, put into my hands, I believe, by Dr. Price, which I sent forward.

"I sincerely and heartily thank you, Sir, for the cordial contents of your last letter; but, from the most mature reflection, and taking into consideration my present very infirm state of health, I have resolved to decline accepting the honor intended me by Congress, in the Commission for treating with Great Britain, and I find the less difficulty in coming to this determination, from a persuasion in my own mind that my assistance is not essential, and that it was not the view or expectation of our constituents, that every one named in the Commission should act. I purpose to repair to, or near Mr. Adams, and inquire of him, whether I may yet be serviceable under the Commission to which I had been first appointed, that for borrowing

money for the use of the United States. If he speaks in the affirmative, I shall, though much against my own grain, as is well known at our little court, proceed in the mission with diligence and fidelity; otherwise, I shall take a convenient opportunity of returning to give an account there, of having in the course of two years and upwards done nothing, excepting only the making a great number of rebels in the enemy's country, and reconciling thousands to the doctrine of absolute and unlimited independence; a doctrine, which I asserted and maintained with as much freedom in the Tower of London, as I ever had done in the State House at Philadelphia; and, having contentedly submitted to the loss of my estate, and being ready to lay down my life in support of it, I had the satisfaction of perceiving the coming of converts every day. I must not, however, conclude this head without assuring you, that, should you think proper to ask questions respecting American commerce, or the interest of any particular State, I will answer with candor and the best judgment I am possessed of; but of that judgment I sincerely protest I have the utmost diffidence. God prosper your proceedings in the great work; you will be called blessed by all the grateful of the present generation, and your name will be celebrated by posterity. I feel myself happy in reflecting, that, in the great outlines of a treaty, our opinions exactly coincide, that we shall not want the countenance and assistance of our great and good ally, and that you have so honest a man as Mr. Oswald to deal with for preliminaries. I know him to be superior to chicanery, and am sure he will not defile his mind by attempting any dirty thing.

"I entreat you, Sir, to present my humble respects to M. de Vergennes, and thank his Excellency for his

polite expressions respecting me, and be so good as to say all that shall appear necessary in excuse for my non-appearance at his court.

"Lord Cornwallis called on me the day before I left London, and was, as you may suppose, very anxious to know when he might probably hear from me on the subject of his release; let me, therefore, request your opinion in answer to what I had the honor of writing in my last concerning that affair. I wish it may prove satisfactory to his Lordship, by enabling me, with your consent and concurrence, to cancel a debt, which does not sit easy upon me, and which cannot with honor to our country remain unpaid. I think we shall not, it is impossible we should, incur displeasure by doing an act of common justice, and our authority may be fairly implied.

"His Lordship declares he has no intention of returning to America, but desires to be reinstated in his legislative and military character in his own country, and I am of opinion, that in the former he will rather be friendly to us than otherwise. For my own part, if the war continues, I should not be uneasy if his Lordship were to go to the Chesapeake again.

"I have a thousand compliments and good wishes to present to you from friends in England, where, males and females, I am sure you have at least so many, that your own remembrance will lead you to individuals of your old acquaintance.

"To-morrow I intend to proceed to Brussels, and thence, probably, to the Hague and Amsterdam. My movements must, unavoidably, be as slow as water carriage. My weak under limbs cannot bear continual thumping on the pavement in the rough machines of this country, and the feebleness of my pocket will not admit the indulgence of a more convenient vehicle.

I beg, Sir, you will write to me at the house of Mr. Edward Jennings, or under the protection of any other friend in that city, that will be at the trouble of finding out a voyager, who is, at all times, and in all places, with the highest esteem and respect, Sir, &c.

"HENRY LAURENS."

To the above, I wrote the following answer.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

"Passy, 25 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I am now honored with yours of the 17th. I had before received one of the 7th, which remained unanswered, because, from the words in it, 'when I reach the Continent, which will probably happen in a few days,' I flattered myself with the pleasure of seeing you here. That hope is disappointed by your last, in which you tell me, you are determined not to act in the Commission for treating of peace with Great Britain. I regret your taking this resolution, principally because I am persuaded, that your assistance must have been of great service to our country. But I have besides some private or particular reasons, that relate to myself.

"To encourage me in the arduous task, you kindly tell me I shall be called *blessed, &c.* I have never yet known of a peace made, that did not occasion a great deal of popular discontent, clamor, and censure on both sides. This is, perhaps, owing to the usual management of the leaders and ministers of the contending nations, who, to keep up the spirits of their people for continuing the war, generally represent the state of their own affairs in a better light, and that of the enemy in a worse, than is consistent with the truth; hence the populace on each side expect better terms

than can really be obtained, and are apt to ascribe their disappointment to treachery. Thus the peace of Utrecht, and that of Aix-la-Chapelle, were said in England to have been influenced by French gold, and in France, by English guineas. Even the last peace, the most glorious and advantageous for England that ever she made, was, you may remember, violently decried, and the makers as violently abused. So that the blessing promised to peacemakers, I fancy, relates to the next world, for in this they seem to have a greater chance of being cursed. And as another text observes, that in '*the multitude of counsellors there is safety*,' which I think may mean safety to the counsellors as well as to the counselled, because, if they commit a fault in counselling, the blame does not fall upon one or a few, but is divided among many, and the share of each is so much the lighter, or because when a number of honest men are concerned, the suspicion of their being biassed is weaker, as being more improbable; or because *defendit numerus;* for all these reasons, but especially for the support your established character of integrity would afford me against the attacks of enemies, if this treaty take place, and I am to act in it, I wish for your presence, and the presence of as many of the Commissioners as possible, and I hope you will reconsider and change your resolution.

"In the mean time, as you have had opportunities of conversing with the new ministers, and other leading people in England, and of learning their sentiments relating to terms of peace, &c., I request you would inform me by letters of what you think important. Letters from you will come safer by the court courier than by the post, and I desire you would, if you should continue determined not to act, commu-

nicate to me your ideas of the terms to be insisted on, and the points to be attended to, respecting commerce, fisheries, boundaries, and every other material circumstance, that may be of importance to all or any of the United States.

"Lord Shelburne having written to me on the subject of the wished for peace, I acquainted him in my answer, sent by our friend, Mr. Oswald, that you were one of the Commissioners, appointed by Congress to treat with Britain, and that I imagined his Lordship would therefore think proper to discharge you entirely from the obligations you entered into, when you were admitted to bail, that you might be at liberty to act freely in the Commission. He wrote to me in reply, that you were accordingly discharged immediately. His Lordship mentioned nothing of any exchange being expected for you; nevertheless, I honor your sensibility on the point, and your concern for the credit of America, that she should not be outdone in generosity by Great Britain, and will cheerfully join with you in any act, that you may think proper, to discharge in return the parole of Lord Cornwallis, as far as in our power may lie; but we have no express authority for that purpose, and the Congress may possibly, in the mean time, have made some other arrangement relative to his exchange. I conceive, that our acts should contain a clause, reserving to Congress the final approbation or disallowance of the proceeding; and I have some doubt whether Lord Cornwallis will think himself well freed of his engagements, and at liberty to exercise his military employments, by virtue of any concession in his favor made by persons, who are not vested with authority for that purpose. So that, on the whole, perhaps the best and surest way will be, our writing immediately to Congress, and strongly

recommending the measure. However, I will do what you shall think best.

"I heartily wish you success in any endeavours you may use in Holland for raising a loan of money. We have pressed rather too hard on this court, and we still want more than they can conveniently spare us; but I am sorry, that too scrupulous regard to our wants and difficulties should induce you, under the present infirmity of your lower limbs, to deny yourself the necessary comfort of an easy carriage, rather than make any use of the public assistance, when the public must be much in your debt. I beg you would get over that difficulty, and take of me what you may have occasion for.

"The letter you forwarded to me was from America's constant friend, the good Bishop of St. Asaph. He speaks of you in terms of the highest esteem and respect.

"Mr. Oswald has gone back again to London, but intended to return again immediately. Mr. Grenville remains here, and has received power to treat, but no further steps can be taken till Spain and Holland have empowered ministers for the same purpose.

"I shall inform you and Mr. Adams (if he does not come) of the proceeding from time to time, and request your counsel in cases of any difficulty. I hope you will not think of hazarding a return to America before a peace, if we find any hopes of its being soon obtained; and that, if you do not find you can be useful in the manner you wish, in Holland, you will make me happy by your company and counsel here. With great and sincere esteem, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

May 26th, I received the following from Mr. Hartley.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

"London, 13 May, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I wrote you a long letter dated May 1st,* by Mr. Laurens, who left London on Saturday last, but I will add a few lines now by a conveyance, which I believe will overtake him, just to tell you two or three things, which I believe I omitted in my last. Perhaps they may not be of any consequence, but, as they relate to my own conduct, I could wish to have you understand them.

"After several conferences with the late ministry, I gave in the paper, called the *Breviate*,† on the 7th of February, but I never received any answer from them. They resigned on the 20th of March. Upon the accession of the new ministry, I heard nothing from them upon the subject, nor indeed did I apply to them. I did no know whether that paper would not come into their hands by succession, and I doubted whether it might not be more proper for me to wait till I heard from them. While I remained doubtful about this, I received your letters, which determined me to go to Lord Shelburne. This was about the beginning of the present month. I communicated to him some extracts, such as those about the prisoners, &c., and likewise the whole of your letter of April 13th, containing the offer of the late ministry, the King of France's answer, together with your reflections in the conclusion respecting peace. As you had given me a general permission, I left with him a copy of the whole letter.

"Upon the occasion of this interview, Lord Shel-

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 343.

† *Ibid.* p. 351.

burne told me, that he had made much inquiry in the offices for the correspondence and papers, which had passed between the late ministry and me, but that he could not meet with them. He expressed a regret, that he had not conversed with me at an earlier day, with many civilities of that kind. In short, I had been backward to intrude myself, and he expressed regret that he had not sent for me.

"Upon this opening on his part, I stated to him the substance of what passed between the late ministry and myself, and I left a copy of the *Breviate* with him. He gave me a very attentive audience, and I took that opportunity of stating my sentiments to him, as far as I could, upon every view of the question. Upon his expressing his regret that he had not seen me sooner, I told him that I always had been, and always should be, most ready to give any assistance in my power towards the work of peace. I say the same to you.

"I do not believe that there is any difference of sentiment between you and me, *personally*, in our own minds upon independence, &c. &c. But we belong to different communities, and the right of judgment, and of consent and dissent, is vested in the community. Divide independence into six millions of shares, and you should have been heartily *welcome* to *my* share from the beginning of the war. Divide Canada into six millions of shares, I could find a better method of disposing of *my* share, than by offering it to France to abandon America. Divide the Rock of Gibraltar into six millions of pieces, I can only answer for one portion. Let Reason and Justice decide in any such case, as universal umpires between contending parties, and those, who wish well to the permanent peace of mankind, will not refuse to give and to receive equal justice.

"I agree with you, that the equitable and the philosophical principles of politics can alone form a solid foundation of permanent peace; and the contraries to them, though highly patronized by nations themselves, and their ministers, are no better than vulgar errors; but nations are slow to convictions from the personal arguments of individuals. They are 'jealous in honor, seeking the *bubble reputation* even in the cannon's mouth.' But until a confirmed millennium, founded upon wiser principles, shall be generally established, the *reputation* of nations is not merely a *bubble*. It forms their real security.

"To apply all this, in one word, let all nations agree, with one accord, to beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, or give me wooden walls to Great Britain! I have nothing further to add. My reason for writing this was just to communicate to you in what position I had delivered over my conferences and arguments with the late ministry into the hands of the present. And I will conclude with your own words, may God send us all more wisdom. I am ever, most affectionatley, yours, &c. D. Hartley."

"P. S. *May 17th.* Since writing the above, I have likewise left a copy of the enclosed preliminaries with Lord Shelburne."

PRELIMINARIES.

"May, 1782.

"1. That the British troops shall be withdrawn from the Thirteen Provinces of North America, and a truce made between Great Britain and the said Provinces, for years. (Suppose ten or twenty years.)

"2. That a negotiation for peace shall *bonâ fide* be opened between Great Britain and the allies of America.

"3. If the proposed negotiation between Great Britain and the allies of America should not succeed so far as to produce peace, but that war should continue between the said parties, that America should act, and be treated, as a neutral nation.

"4. That, whenever peace shall take place between Great Britain and the allies of America, the truce between Great Britain and America shall be converted into a perpetual peace, the independence of America shall be admitted and guarantied by Great Britain, and a commercial treaty settled between them.

"5. That these propositions shall be made to the court of France, for communication to the American Commissioners, and for an answer to the court of Great Britain."

The same day Mr. Grenville visited me. He acquainted me that his courier was returned, and had brought him full powers in form to treat for a peace *with France and her allies.* That he had been at Versailles, and had shown his power to M. de Vergennes, and left a copy with him. That he had also a letter of credence, which he was not to deliver till France should think fit to send a minister of the same kind to London; that M. de Vergennes had told him, that he would lay it before the King, and had desired to see him again on Wednesday. That Mr. Oswald had arrived in London, about an hour before the courier came away. That Mr. Fox in his letter had charged him to thank me for that which I had written, and to tell me, that he hoped I would never forget, that he and I were of the same country.

I answered, that I should always esteem it an honor to be owned as a countryman of Mr. Fox. He had requested me, at our last interview, that, if I saw no

impropriety in doing it, I would favor him with a sight of the treaty of alliance between France and America. I acquainted him that it was printed, but that if he could not readily meet with a copy, I would have one written for him. And, as he had not been able to find one, I this day gave it to him.

He lent me a London gazette, containing Admiral Rodney's account of his victory over M. de Grasse, and the accounts of other successes in the East Indies, assuring me, however, that these events made not the least change in the sincere desire of his court to treat for peace.

In the afternoon the Marquis de Lafayette called upon me. I acquainted him with what Mr. Grenville had told me respecting the credential letter, and the expectation that a person on the part of this court would be sent to London with a commission similar to his. The Marquis told me, he was on his way to Versailles, and should see M. de Vergennes. We concluded, that it would now be proper for him to make the proposition we had before talked of, that he should be the person employed in that service.

On Monday, the 27th, I received a letter from Mr. Jay, dated the 8th, acquainting me, that he had received mine of the 21st and 22d past, and had concluded to set out for Paris about the 19th, so that he may be expected in a few days.

I dined this day with Count d'Estaing, and a number of brave marine officers, that he had invited. We were all a little dejected with the news. I mentioned, by way of encouragement, the observation of the Turkish bashaw, who was taken with his fleet at Lepanto by the Venetians. "Ships," says he, "are like my master's beard; you may cut it, but it will grow again. He has cut off from your government all the

Morea, which is like a limb, which you will never recover." And his words proved true.

On Tuesday I dined at Versailles with some friends, so was not at home when the Marquis de Lafayette called to acquaint me, that M. de Vergennes informed him, that the full power received by Mr. Grenville from London, and communicated by him, related to France only. The Marquis left for me this information, which I could not understand. On Wednesday I was at court, and saw the copy of the power. It appeared full with regard to treating with France, but mentioned not a word of her allies. And, as M. de Vergennes had explicitly and constantly, from the beginning, declared to the several messengers, Mr. Forth, Mr. Oswald, and Mr. Grenville, that France could only treat in concert with her allies, and it had in consequence been declared on the part of the British ministry, that they consented to treat for a general peace, and at Paris, the sending this partial power seemed to be insidious, and a mere invention to occasion delay, the late disasters to the French fleet having probably given the court of England fresh courage and other views.

M. de Vergennes said he should see Mr. Grenville on Thursday, and would speak his mind to him, on the subject very plainly. "They want," said he, "to treat with us for you, but this the King will not agree to. He thinks it not consistent with the dignity of your state. You will treat for yourselves; and every one of the powers at war with England will make its own treaty. All that is necessary for our common security is, that the treaties go hand in hand, and are signed all on the same day."

Prince Bariatinski, the Russian ambassador, was particularly civil to me this day at court, apologized for what passed relating to the visit, expressed himself ex-

tremely sensible of my friendship in covering the affair, which might have occasioned him very disagreeable consequences, &c. The Count du Nord came to M. de Vergennes, while we were drinking coffee, after dinner. He appears lively and active, with a sensible, spirited countenance. There was an opera that night for his entertainment. The house being richly finished with abundance of carving and gilding, well illuminated with wax tapers, and the company all superbly dressed, many of the men in cloth of tissue, and the ladies sparkling with diamonds, formed altogether the most splendid spectacle my eyes ever beheld.

I had some little conference to-day with Messrs. Berkenrode, Vanderpierre, and Boeris, the ambassador of Holland and the agents of the Dutch East India Company. They informed me, that the second letter of Mr. Fox to the mediating minister of Russia, proposing a separate peace with Holland, made no more impression than the first, and no peace would be made but in concurrence with France.

The Swedish minister told me he expected orders from his court relative to a treaty, &c.

I had, at our last interview, given Mr. Grenville a rendezvous for Saturday morning, and, having some other engagements for Thursday and Friday, though I wished to speak with him on the subject of his power, I did not go to him, but waited his coming to me on Saturday. On Friday, May 31st, Mr. Oswald called on me, being just returned, and brought me the following letter from David Hartley, and two letters from Lord Shelburne, the first of which had been written before his arrival.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

"London, 25 May, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Yours of the 13th instant I received by Mr. Oswald. I did not doubt but that the news of a general and absolute release of the American prisoners, which Lord Shelburne was so good as to communicate to me, in answer to that part of your letter of the 5th of April, in which you speak so pathetically of *sweet reconciliation*, would give you much sincere and heartfelt pleasure. God send, that it may be the happy omen of final *reconciliation* and *durable peace*. I should be very happy to hear that good news from you, and in any way to contribute to it. Having on that subject communicated the preliminaries, dated May, 1782, to Lord Shelburne, you may be assured that I have no reservations upon that head respecting America, in any circumstances or condition whatever. You know all my thoughts upon that subject, and the principles upon which they are founded, and, therefore, that they are not changeable.

"It would give me the greatest pleasure, if I could hope for any opportunity of seeing you. I could say many things, which are otherwise incommunicable, and which perhaps would contribute to facilitate the road to peace. I think I see in many parts much matter to work with, out of which a peace, honorable to all parties and upon durable principles, might be established. *No degrading or mortifying conditions to shorten peace and rekindle war.* Perhaps I might not say too much if I were to add, that simply the adoption of *reason* among nations, and the mere rectification of obsolete and gothic absurdities, which carry no gratification, would afford a fund of remuneration to all par-

ties for renouncing those objects of mutual contention, which, *in the eye of reason*, are no better than creatures of passion, jealousy, and false pride. Until the principles of *reason* and equity shall be adopted in national transactions, peace will not be durable amongst men.

"These are reflections general to all nations. As to the mutual concerns between Great Britain and North America, *reconciliation* is the touchstone to prove those hearts, which are without alloy. If I can be of any assistance to you, in any communications or explanations conducive to peace, you may command my utmost services. Even if a French minister were to overhear such an offer, let him not take it in jealous part. Zealously and affectionately attached to my own country and to America, I am nevertheless most perfectly of accord with you, that justice and honor should be observed towards all nations. Mr. Oswald will do me the favor to convey this to you. I heartily wish him success in his pacific embassy. Yours ever, most affectionately, D. HARTLEY."

FROM THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Whitehall, 21 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I am honored with your letter of the 10th instant, and am very glad to find that the conduct, which the King has empowered me to observe towards Mr. Laurens, and the American prisoners, has given you pleasure. I have signified to Mr. Oswald his Majesty's pleasure, that he shall continue at Paris till he receives orders from hence to return. In the present state of this business, there is nothing for me to add, but my sincere wishes for a happy issue, and to repeat my assurances, that nothing shall be wanting on

my part which can contribute to it. I have the honor to be, with very great regard,

"SHELBURNE."*

* As the Earl of Shelburne was the principal minister concerned in negotiating the peace, and as it was a very important event in his official life, he retained among his private papers a copy of the entire correspondence between the ministry and Mr. Oswald, the British commissioner in Paris, during the whole of the negotiation. This valuable collection is now in the possession of the Marquis of Lansdown, by whose courtesy and liberality I was favored with a complete transcript of it, while I was pursuing my researches for materials relating to American history in the public offices of London; with permission to make such use of any parts of the correspondence, as would conduce to historical truth, or help to explain the transactions to which it relates. In Mr. Oswald's letters, he gives copious accounts of his conversations with Dr. Franklin, and the other commissioners, on the subject of the treaty; from which the views of the parties and their modes of proceeding are more or less clearly ascertained. These letters bear so directly on many points in Dr. Franklin's correspondence, while the negotiation was in progress, that I shall add in the notes a few extracts from them as occasions may offer, premising the above statement merely for the reader's information, as to their origin and authenticity.

From the Earl of Shelburne to Richard Oswald. — "I am sorry to observe, that the French minister gives very little reason to expect, that his court is likely to make good their professions, which they made, through so many channels, of a desire of peace upon terms becoming this country to accept, upon the strength of which Dr. Franklin invited the present negotiation. I have that entire confidence in Dr. Franklin's integrity and strict honor, that, if the court of France have other views, and that they have been throwing out false lures to support the appearance of moderation throughout Europe, and in the hope of misleading and the chance of dividing us, I am satisfied, that he must have been himself deceived; and, in such a case, I trust, that, if this shall be proved in the course of the present negotiation, he will consider himself and his constituents freed from the tie, which will appear to have been founded upon no ideas of common interest.

"We shall, however, I hope, speedily ascertain the real purposes of France by their conduct in the future progress of this negotiation, which the King will not suffer to go into any length. In the mean time, you will govern your conversation with the American Commissioners with all possible prudence, collecting their sentiments, and every other information, which you conceive may hereafter prove useful; and I have his Majesty's commands to acquaint you, that it is his pleasure you should continue at Paris, till you receive his orders to return, of which you will acquaint Dr. Franklin and Count de Vergennes." — *Whitehall, May 21st. MS. Letter.*

FROM THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Whitehall, 25 May, 1782.

"Sir,

"I have the honor to receive your letter of the 13th of May, by Mr. Oswald. It gives me great pleasure to find my opinion of moderation, prudence, and judgment of that gentleman confirmed by your concurrence. For I am glad to assure you, that we likewise concur in hoping that those qualities may enable him to contribute to the speedy conclusion of a peace, and such a peace as may be firm and long lasting. In that hope, he has the King's orders to return immediately to Paris, and you will find him, I trust, properly instructed to coöperate in so desirable an object. I have the honor to be, &c.

"Shelburne."

I had not then time to converse much with Mr. Oswald, and he promised to come and breakfast with me on Monday.

Saturday, June 5th. Mr. Grenville came, according to appointment. Our conversation began by my acquainting him, that I had seen the Count de Vergennes, and had perused the copy left with him of the power to treat. That, after what he, Mr. Grenville, told me of its being to treat with France *and her allies*, I was a little surprised to find in it no mention of the allies, and that it was only to treat with the King of France and his ministers; that, at Versailles, there was some suspicion of its being intended to occasion delay; the professed desire of a speedy peace being, perhaps, abated in the British court since its late successes; but that I imagined the words relating to the allies might have been accidentally omitted in tran-

scribing, or that, perhaps, he had a special power to treat with us distinct from the other.

He answered, that the copy was right, and that he had no such power in form, but that his instructions were full to that purpose, and that he was sure the ministers had no desire of delay, nor any of excluding us from the treaty, since the greatest part of those instructions related to treating with me. That, to convince me of this sincerity of his court respecting us, he would acquaint me with one of his instructions, though, perhaps, the doing it now was premature, and therefore a little inconsistent with the character of a politician, but he had that confidence in me that he should not hesitate to inform me (though he wished that at present it should go no further,) *he was instructed to acknowledge the independence of America, previous to the commencement of the treaty.* And he said he could only account for the omission of America in the POWER, by supposing that it was an old official form copied from that given to Mr. Stanley, when he came over hither before the last peace. Mr. Grenville added, that he had, immediately after his interview with the Count de Vergennes, despatched a courier to London, and hoped, that with his return the difficulty would be removed. That he was perfectly assured their late success had made no change in the disposition of his court to peace, and that he had more reason than the Count de Vergennes to complain of delays, since five days were spent before he could obtain a passport for his courier, and then it was not to go and return by way of Calais, but to go by Ostend, which would occasion a delay of five days longer. Mr. Grenville then spoke much of the high opinion the present ministry had of me, and their great esteem for me, their desire of a perfect reconciliation

between the two countries, and the firm and general belief in England, that no man was so capable as myself of proposing the proper means of bringing about such a reconciliation; adding that, if the old ministers had formerly been too little attentive to my counsels, the present were very differently disposed, and he hoped that in treating with them, I would totally forget their predecessors.

The time has been when such flattering language, as from great men, might have made me vainer, and had more effect on my conduct, than it can at present, when I find myself so near the end of life as to esteem lightly all personal interests and concerns, except that of maintaining to the last, and leaving behind me the tolerably good character I have hitherto supported.

Mr. Grenville then discoursed of our resolution not to treat without our allies. "This," says he, "can only properly relate to France, with whom you have a treaty of alliance, but you have none with Spain, you have none with Holland. If Spain and Holland, and even if France should insist on unreasonable terms of advantage to themselves, after you have obtained all you want, and are satisfied, can it be right that America should be dragged on in a war for their interest only?" He stated this matter in various lights and pressed it earnestly.

I resolved, from various reasons, to evade the discussion, therefore answered, that the intended treaty not being yet begun, it appeared unnecessary to enter at present into considerations of that kind. The preliminaries being once settled and the treaty commenced, if any of the other powers should make extravagant demands on England, and insist on our continuing the war till those were complied with, it would then be time enough to consider what our ob-

ligations were, and how far they extended. The first thing necessary was for him to procure the full powers, the next for us to assemble the plenipotentiaries of all the belligerent parties, and then propositions might be mutually made, received, considered, answered, or agreed to. In the mean time I would just mention to him, that, though we were yet under no obligations to Spain by treaty, we were under obligations of gratitude for the assistance she had afforded us; and as Mr. Adams had some weeks since commenced a treaty in Holland, the terms of which I was not yet acquainted with, I knew not but that we might have already some alliance and obligations contracted there. And perhaps we ought, however, to have some consideration for Holland on this account, that it was in vengeance for the friendly disposition shown by some of her people to make a treaty of commerce with us, that England had declared the war against her.

He said, it would be hard upon England, if, having given reasonable satisfaction to one or two of her enemies, she could not have peace with those till she had complied with whatever the others might demand, however unreasonable, for so she might be obliged to pay for every article fourfold. I observed, that when she made her propositions, the more advantageous they were to each, the more it would be the interest of each to prevail with the others to accept those offered to them. We then spoke of the reconciliation; but, his full power not being yet come, I chose to defer entering upon that subject at present. I told him, I had thoughts of putting down in writing the particulars that I judged would conduce to that end, and of adding my reasons, that this required a little time, and I had been hindered by accidents; which was true, for I had begun to write, but had postponed

it on account of his defective power to treat. But I promised to finish it as soon as possible. He pressed me earnestly to do it, saying, an expression of mine in a former conversation, that there still remained *roots of good will* in America towards England, which if properly taken care of might produce a reconciliation, had made a great impression on his mind, and given him infinite pleasure, and he hoped I would not neglect furnishing him with the information of what would be necessary to nourish those *roots*, and could assure me, that my advice would be greatly regarded.

Mr. Grenville had shown me at our last interview a letter from the Duke of Richmond to him, requesting him to prevail with me to disengage a Captain McLeod, of the artillery, from his parole, the Duke's brother, Lord George Lenox, being appointed to the command of Portsmouth, and desiring to have him as his aid-de-camp. I had promised to consider it, and this morning I sent him the following letter.

TO MR. GRENVILLE.

"Passy, 31 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"I do not find, that I have any express authority to absolve a parole given by an English officer in America; but, desirous of complying with a request of the Duke of Richmond, as far as may be in my power, and being confident, that the Congress will be pleased with whatever may oblige a personage they so much respect, I do hereby consent, that Captain McLeod serve in his military capacity in England only, till the pleasure of the Congress is known, to whom I will write immediately, and who, I make no doubt, will discharge him entirely. I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

America had been constantly befriended in Parliament by the Duke of Richmond, and I believed the Congress would not be displeased, that this opportunity was taken of obliging him, and that they would by their approbation supply the deficiency of my power. Besides, I could not well refuse it, after what had passed between Mr. Laurens and me, and what I had promised to do for that gentleman.

Sunday, June 2d. The Marquis de Lafayette called and dined with me. He is uneasy about the delay, as he cannot resolve concerning his voyage to America, till some certainty appears of there being a treaty or no treaty. This day I wrote the following letter to Mr. Adams.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

"Passy, 2 June, 1782.

"SIR,

"Since mine of May 8th, I have not had any thing material to communicate to your Excellency. Mr. Grenville indeed arrived just after I had despatched that letter, and I introduced him to M. de Vergennes, but, as his mission seemed only a repetition of that by Mr. Oswald, the same declaration of the King of England's sincere desire of peace, and willingness to treat at Paris, which were answered by the same declarations of the good dispositions of this court, and that it could not treat without the concurrence of its allies, I omitted writing till something should be produced from a kind of agreement, that M. de Vergennes would acquaint Spain and Holland with the overture, and Mr. Grenville would write for full powers to treat, and make propositions; nothing of importance being in the mean time to be transacted.

"Mr. Grenville accordingly despatched a messenger

for London, who returned in about twelve days. Mr. Grenville called on me, after having been at Versailles, and acquainted me, that he had received the power, and had left a copy of it with M. de Vergennes, and that he was thereby authorized to treat with France and her *allies*. The next time I went to Versailles, I desired to see that copy, and was surprised to find in it no mention of the allies of France, or any one of them, and, on speaking with M. de Vergennes about it, I found he began to look upon the whole as a piece of artifice to amuse us, and gain time; since he had uniformly declared to every agent who had appeared there, viz. to Forth, Oswald, and Grenville, that the King would not treat without the concurrence of his allies, and yet England had given a power to treat with France only, which showed she did not intend to treat at all, but meant to continue the war.

"I had not till yesterday an opportunity of talking with Mr. Grenville on the subject, and expressing my wonder, that, after what he told me, there should be no mention made of our States in his commission; he could not explain this to my satisfaction, but said, he believed the omission was occasioned by their copying an old commission given to Mr. Stanley at the last treaty of peace, for he was sure the intention was, that he should treat with us, his instructions being fully to that purpose. I acquainted him, that I thought a special commission was necessary, without which we could not treat with him. I imagine, that there is a reluctance in their King to take this first step, as the giving such a commission would itself be a kind of acknowledgment of our independence. Their late success against Count de Grasse may also have given them hopes, that, by delay and more successes, they may make that acknowledgment and a peace less necessary.

"Mr. Grenville has written to his court for further instructions. We shall see what the return of his courier will produce. If full power to treat with each of the powers at war against England does not appear, I imagine the negotiation will be broken off. Mr. Grenville, in his conversation with me, insists much on our being under no engagements not to make a peace without Holland. I have answered him, that I know not but that you may have entered into some, and if there should be none, a general pacification, made at the same time, would be best for us all, and that I believe neither Holland nor we could be prevailed on to abandon our friends. What happens further shall be immediately communicated.

"Be pleased to present my respects to Mr. Laurens, to whom I wrote some days since. Mr. Jay, I suppose, is on his way hither. With great respect, &c. B. FRANKLIN."

On Monday the 3d, Mr. Oswald came according to appointment. He told me, he had seen and had conversations with Lord Shelburne, Lord Rockingham, and Mr. Fox. That their desire of peace continued uniformly the same, though he thought some of them were a little too much elated with the late victory in the West Indies; and when, observing his coolness, they asked him, if he did not think it a very good thing; "yes," said he, "if you do not rate it too high." He went on with the utmost frankness to tell me, that the peace was absolutely necessary for them. That the nation had been foolishly involved in four wars, and could no longer raise money to carry them on, so that if they continued, it would be absolutely necessary for them to stop payment of the interest money on the funds, which would ruin their future credit.

He spoke of stopping on all sums above one thousand pounds, and continuing to pay on those below, because the great sums belonged to the rich, who could better bear the delay of their interest, and the smaller sums to poorer persons, who would be more hurt, and make more clamor, and that the rich might be quieted by promising them interest upon their interest. All this looked as if the matter had been seriously thought on.

Mr. Oswald has an air of great simplicity and honesty, yet I could hardly take this to be merely a weak confession of their deplorable state, and thought it might be rather intended as a kind of intimidation, by showing us that they had still that resource in their power, which he said would furnish five millions a year. But, he added, our enemies may now do what they please with us; *they have the ball at their foot*, was his expression, and we hope they will show their moderation and magnanimity. He then repeatedly mentioned the great esteem the ministers had for me, that they, with all the considerate people of England, looked to, and depended on me for the means of extricating the nation from its present desperate situation; and that, perhaps, no single man had ever in his hands an opportunity of doing so much good as I had at this present time, with much more to that purpose. He then showed me a letter to him from Lord Shelburne, partly, I suppose, that I might see his Lordship's opinion of me, which, as it has some relation to the negotiation, is here inserted. He left it with me, requesting that I would communicate it to Mr. Walpole.

FROM THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO RICHARD OSWALD.

"Whitehall, 21 May, 1782.

"SIR,

"It has reached me, that Mr. Walpole esteems himself much injured by your going to Paris, and that he conceives it was a measure of mine, intended to take the present negotiation with the court of France out of his hands, which he conceives to have been previously commenced through his channel, by Mr. Fox. I must desire that you will have the goodness to call upon Mr. Walpole, and explain to him distinctly, how very little foundation there is for so unjust a suspicion, as I knew of no such intercourse. Mr. Fox declares, he considered what had passed between him and Mr. Walpole, of a mere private nature, not sufficiently material to mention to the King or the cabinet, and will write to Mr. Walpole to explain this distinctly to him.

"But if you find the least suspicion of this kind has reached Dr. Franklin, or the Count de Vergennes, I desire this matter may be clearly explained to both. I have too much friendship for Dr. Franklin, and too much respect for the character of the Count de Vergennes, with which I am perfectly acquainted, to be so indifferent to the good opinion of either, as to suffer them to believe me capable of an intrigue, where I have both professed and observed a direct opposite course of conduct. In truth, I hold it in such perfect contempt, that, however proud I may be to serve the King in my present situation, or in any other, and however anxious I may be to serve my country, I should not hesitate a moment about retiring from any situation which required such services. But I must

do the King the justice to say, that his Majesty abhors them, and I need not tell you, that it is my fixed principle, that no country in any moment can be advantaged by them. I am, with great truth and regard, &c. SHELBURNE."

In speaking further of the ministry's opinion of the great service it might be in my power to render, Mr. Oswald said, he had told them in one of his conversations, that nothing was to be expected of me but consistency, nothing unsuitable to my character, or inconsistent with my duty to my country. I did not ask him the particular occasion of his saying this, but thought it looked a little as if something inconsistent with my duty had been talked of or proposed. Mr. Oswald also gave me a copy of a paper of memorandums, written by Lord Shelburne, viz.

"1. That I am ready to correspond more particularly with Dr. Franklin, if wished.

"2. That the *Enabling Act* is passing, with the insertion of Commissioners recommended by Mr. Oswald; and, on our part, commissioners will be named, or any character given to Mr. Oswald, which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final settlement of things between Great Britain and America; which Dr. Franklin very properly says, requires to be treated in a very different manner from the peace between Great Britain and France, who have always been at enmity with each other.

"3. That an establishment for the loyalists must always be on Mr. Oswald's mind, as it is uppermost in Lord Shelburne's, besides other steps in their favor to influence the several States to agree to a fair restoration or compensation for whatever confiscations have taken place.

"4. To give Lord Shelburne's letter about Mr. Walpole to Dr. Franklin."

On perusing this paper, I recollected that a bill had been some time since proposed in Parliament, *To enable his Majesty to conclude a Peace or Truce with the revolted Provinces in America*, which I supposed to be the *Enabling Bill* mentioned, that had hitherto slept; and, not having been passed, was perhaps the true reason why the colonies were not mentioned in Mr. Grenville's commission. Mr. Oswald thought it likely, and said, that the words, "insertion of Commissioners, recommended by Mr. Oswald," related to his advising an express mention in the bill of the Commissioners appointed by Congress to treat of peace, instead of the vague denomination of *any person or persons, &c.* in the first draft of the bill.

As to the loyalists, I repeated what I had said to him when first here, that their estates had been confiscated by the laws made in particular States where the delinquents had resided, and not by any law of Congress, who, indeed, had no power, either to make such laws or to repeal them, or to dispense with them, and, therefore, could give no power to their Commissioners to treat of a restoration for those people; that it was an affair appertaining to each State. That if there were justice in compensating them, it must be due from England rather than America; but, in my opinion, England was not under any very great obligations to them, since it was by their misrepresentations and bad counsels, she had been drawn into this miserable war. And that if an account was to be brought against us for their losses, we should more than balance it by an account of the ravages they had committed all along the coasts of America.

Mr. Oswald agreed to the reasonableness of all this, and said he had, before he came away, told the ministers, that he thought no recompense to those people was to be expected from us; that he had, also, in consequence of our former conversation on that subject, given it as his opinion, that Canada should be given up to the United States, as it would prevent the occasions of future difference, and as the government of such a country was worth nothing, and of no importance, if they could have there a free commerce; that the Marquis of Rockingham and Lord Shelburne, though they spoke reservedly, did not seem very averse to it, but that Mr. Fox appeared to be startled at the proposition. He was, however, not without hopes that it would be agreed to.

We now came to another article of the note, viz. "on our part commissioners will be named, or any character given to Mr. Oswald, which Dr. Franklin and he may judge conducive to a final settlement of things between Great Britain and America."

This he said was left entirely to me, for he had no will in the affair; he did not desire to be further concerned, than to see it *in train*, he had no personal views either of honor or profit. He had now seen and conversed with Mr. Grenville, thought him a very sensible young gentleman, and very capable of the business; he did not, therefore, see any further occasion there was for himself; but if I thought otherwise, and conceived he might be further useful, he was content to give his time and service, in any character or manner I should think proper. I said, his knowledge of America, where he had lived, and with every part of which, and of its commerce and circumstances he was well acquainted, made me think, that, in persuading the ministry to things reasonable relating to that

country, he could speak or write with more weight than Mr. Grenville, and, therefore, I wished him to continue in the service; and I asked him, whether he would like to be joined in a general commission for treating with all the powers at war with England, or to have a special commission to himself for treating with America only. He said, he did not choose to be concerned in treaty with the foreign powers, for he was not sufficiently a master of their affairs, or of the French language, which, probably, would be used in treating; if, therefore, he accepted of any commission, it should be that of treating with America. I told him I would write to Lord Shelburne on the subject; but Mr. Grenville having some time since despatched a courier, partly on account of the commission, who was not yet returned, I thought it well to wait a few days, till we could see what answer he would bring, or what measures were taken. This he approved of.

The truth is, he appears so good and so reasonable a man, that, though I have no objection to Mr. Grenville, I should be loth to lose Mr. Oswald. He seems to have nothing at heart but the good of mankind, and putting a stop to mischief; the other, a young statesman, may be supposed to have naturally a little ambition of recommending himself as an able negotiator.

In the afternoon, M. Boeris, of Holland, called on me, and acquainted me, that the answer had not yet been given to the last memorial from Russia, relating to the mediation; but it was thought it would be in respectful terms, to thank her Imperial Majesty for her kind offers, and to represent the propriety of their connexion with France in endeavours to obtain a general peace, and that they conceived it would be still more glorious for her Majesty to employ her influence in procuring a general, than a particular pacification. M.

Boeris further informed me, that they were not well satisfied in Holland with the conduct of the Russian court, and suspected views of continuing the war for particular purposes.

Tuesday, June 4th. I have received another packet from Mr. Hartley. It consisted of duplicates of former letters and papers already inserted, and contained nothing new but the following letter from Colonel Hartley, his brother.

FROM W. H. HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Soho Square, 24 May, 1782

"DEAR SIR,

"It is with the greatest pleasure I take up my pen to acknowledge your remembrance of me in yours to my brother, and to thank you for those expressions of regard which I can assure you are mutual. My brother has desired me to copy some letters and papers, by way of sending you duplicates. I am particularly happy at the employment, because the greatest object of my parliamentary life has been to cooperate with him in his endeavours to put a period to this destructive war, and forward the blessed work of peace. I hope to see him again in that situation, where he can so well serve his country with credit to himself; and while I have the honor of being in Parliament, my attention will be continued to promote the effects, which will naturally flow from those principles of freedom and universal philanthropy you have both so much supported. While I copy his words, my own feelings and judgment are truly in unison, and I have but to add the most ardent wish, that peace and happiness may crown the honest endeavours towards so desirable an end. I am, dear Sir, with the greatest respect and esteem, yours sincerely,

"W. H. HARTLEY."

Wednesday, June 5th. Mr. Oswald called again to acquaint me, that Lord Cornwallis, being very anxious to be discharged from his parole as soon as possible, had sent a Major Ross hither to solicit it, supposing Mr. Laurens might be here with me. Mr. Oswald told me, what I had not heard before, that Mr. Laurens, while prisoner in the Tower, had proposed obtaining the discharge of Lord Cornwallis in exchange for himself, and had promised to use his utmost endeavours to that purpose, in case he was set at liberty, not doubting of the success. I communicated to Mr. Oswald what had already passed between Mr. Laurens and me, respecting Lord Cornwallis, which appears in the preceding letters; and told him I should have made less difficulty about the discharge of his parole, if Mr. Laurens had informed me of his being set at liberty in consequence of such an offer and promise; and I wished him to state this in a letter to me, that it might appear for my justification in what I might, with Mr. Laurens, do in the affair, and that he would procure for me from Major Ross a copy of the parole, that I might be better acquainted with the nature of it. He accordingly in the afternoon sent me the following letter.

FROM RICHARD OSWALD TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Paris, 5 June, 1782.

"SIR,

"While Mr. Laurens was under confinement in England, he promised, that, on condition of his being liberated upon his parole, he would apply to you for an exchange in favor of Lord Cornwallis, by a discharge of his Lordship's granted upon the surrender of his garrison at the village of York in Virginia; and, in case of your being under any difficulty in making such exchange, he undertook to write to the Congress, and

to request it of that assembly, making no doubt of obtaining a favorable answer, without loss of time.

"This proposal, signed by Mr. Laurens's hand, I carried and delivered, I think, in the month of December last, to his Majesty's then secretaries of state, which was duly attended to; and, in consequence thereof, Mr. Laurens was soon after set at full liberty. And though not a prisoner under parole, yet it is to be hoped, a variation in the mode of discharge will not be supposed of any essential difference.

"And with respect to Mr. Laurens, I am satisfied he will consider himself as much interested in the success of this application, as if his own discharge had been obtained under the form, as proposed by the representation, which I delivered to the secretaries of state, and, I make no doubt, will sincerely join my Lord Cornwallis in an acknowledgment of your favor and good offices, in granting his Lordship a full discharge of his parole above mentioned. I have the honor to be, with much respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant, RICHARD OSWALD."

"P. S. Major Ross has got no copy of Lord Cornwallis's parole. He says it was in the common form, as in like cases.

"Since writing the above, I recollect I was under a mistake, as if the proposal of exchange came first from Mr. Laurens; whereas, it was made by his Majesty's secretaries of state to me, that Mr. Laurens should endeavour to procure the exchange of Lord Cornwallis, so as to be discharged himself. Which proposal I carried to Mr. Laurens, and had from him the obligation above mentioned, upon which the mode of his discharge was settled. R. O."

To this I wrote the following answer.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

"Passy, 6 June, 1782.

"SIR,

"I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, respecting the parole of Lord Cornwallis. You are acquainted with what I wrote some time since to Mr. Laurens. To-morrow is post day from Holland, when possibly I may receive an answer, with a paper drawn up by him for the purpose of discharging that parole, to be signed by us jointly. I suppose the staying at Paris another day will not be very inconvenient to Major Ross, and, if I do not hear to-morrow from Mr. Laurens, I will immediately, in compliance with your request, do what I can towards the liberation of Lord Cornwallis. I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"B. FRANKLIN."

Friday, June 7th. Major Ross called upon me, to thank me for the favorable intentions I had expressed in my letter to Mr. Oswald, respecting Lord Cornwallis, and to assure me, that his Lordship would for ever remember it with gratitude, &c. I told him it was our duty to alleviate, as much as we could, the calamities of war; that I expected letters from Mr. Laurens, relating to the affair, after the receipt of which I would immediately complete it. Or, if I did not hear from Mr. Laurens, I would speak to the Marquis de Lafayette, get his approbation, and finish it without further delay.

Saturday, June 8th. I received some newspapers from England, in one of which is the following paragraph.

From the London Evening Post, of May 30th, 1782.

"If report on the spot speak truth, Mr. Grenville, in his first visit to Dr. Franklin, gained a considerable point of information, as to the powers America had retained for treating *separately* with Great Britain, in case her claims, or demands, were granted.

"The treaty of February 6th, 1778, was made the basis of this conversation; and, by the spirit and meaning of this treaty, there is no obligation on America not to treat separately for peace, after she is assured England will grant her independence, and a free commerce with all the world.

"The first article of that treaty engages America and France to be bound to each other, as long as *circumstances* may require; therefore, the granting America all she asks of England is breaking the bond, by which the *circumstances* may bind America to France.

"The second article says, the meaning and direct end of the alliance is, to insure the freedom and independence of America. Surely, then, when freedom and independence are allowed by Britain, America may, or may not, as she chooses, put an end to the present war between England and America, and leave France to war on through all her mad projects of reducing the power and greatness of England, while America feels herself possessed of what she wishes.

"By the eighth article of the treaty, neither France nor America can conclude peace without the assent of the other; and they engage not to lay down their arms until the independence of America is acknowledged, but this article does not exclude America from entering into a separate treaty for peace with England, and evinces, more strongly than the former articles, that America may enter into a separate treaty with Eng-

land, when she is convinced that England has insured to her *all that she can reasonably ask.*"

I conjecture that this must be an extract from a letter of Mr. Grenville's; but it carries an appearance as if he and I had agreed in these imaginary discourses, of America's being at liberty to make peace without France, and whereas my whole discourse, in the strongest terms, declared our determinations to the contrary, and the impossibility of our acting, not only contrary to the treaty, but the duties of gratitude and honor, of which nothing is mentioned. This young negotiator seems to value himself on having obtained from me a copy of the treaty. I gave it to him freely, at his request, it being not so much a secret as he imagined, having been printed, first in all the American papers soon after it was made, then at London in Almon's *Remembrancer*, which I wonder he did not know; and afterwards in a collection of the American *Constitutions*, published by order of Congress. As such imperfect accounts of our conversations find their way into the English papers, I must speak to this gentleman of its impropriety.*

Sunday, June 9th. Dr. Bancroft being intimately

* In relation to some of these topics, Mr. Oswald wrote as follows to the Earl of Shelburne.

"I have nothing of business to trouble your Lordship with, only that upon one occasion, since my last arrival, Dr. Franklin said they (the Americans) had been totally left out in Mr. Grenville's powers, as they extended only to treating with the minister of France. I told him, the deficiency would, no doubt, be supplied in due time, as might be supposed, since, in the mean while, they had been assured by Mr. Grenville, that his Majesty had agreed to *grant independence in the first instance.* The Doctor said it was true, and he was glad of it, and supposed that was all that could be done, until the act depending in Parliament was passed.

"He then talked of treaties, and said, he thought the best way to

acquainted with Mr. Walpole, I this day gave him Lord Shelburne's letter to Mr. Oswald, requesting he would communicate it to that gentleman. Dr. Bancroft said, it was believed both Russia and the Emperor wish the continuance of the war, and aimed at procuring for England a peace with Holland, that England might be better able to continue it against France and Spain.

The Marquis de Lafayette having proposed to call on me to-day, I kept back the discharge of Lord Cornwallis, which was written and ready, desiring to have his approbation of it, as he had in a former conversation advised it. He did not come, but late in the evening sent me a note, acquainting me, that he had been prevented, by accompanying the Great Duke to the review, but would breakfast with me to-morrow morning.

This day I received a letter from Mr. Dana, dated at St. Petersburgh, April 29th, in which is the following passage. "We yesterday received the news, that the States-General had, on the 19th of this month,

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come at a general peace was to treat separately with each party, and under distinct commissions to one and the same, or different persons.

"By this method, he said, many difficulties, which must arise in discussing a variety of subjects, not strictly relative to each other, under the same commission, and to which all the several parties are called, would be in a great measure avoided. And then at last there will only remain to consolidate those several settlements into one general and conclusive treaty of pacification; which, upon inquiry, I found he understood to be the indispensable mode of final accommodation.

"However material that part of the question might be, regarding the possibility of an equitable coalescence of so many different propositions and settlements, there was no explanation as to the extent of their relative dependence on each other. And I did not think it proper to ask for it. He only explained, as to the Commissions, that there might be one to treat with France, one for the Colonies, one for Spain, and, he added, one for Holland, if it should be thought proper. Mr. Grenville being very well with the Doctor, he has, no doubt, mentioned the same things to him; yet I thought it my duty to communicate to him the substance of this conversation."—*Paris, June 9th. MS. Letter.*

(N. S.) acknowledged the independence of the United States. This event gave a shock here, and is not well received, as they at least profess to have flattered themselves, that the mediation would have prevented it, and otherwise brought on a partial peace between Britain and Holland. This resentment, I believe, will not be productive of any ill consequences to the Dutch republic." It is true, that while the war continues, Russia feels a greater demand for the naval stores, and perhaps at a higher price. But is it possible, that, for such petty interests, mankind can wish to see their neighbours destroy each other? Or has the project, lately talked of, some foundation, that Russia and the Emperor intend driving the Turks out of Europe, and do they therefore wish to see France and England so weakened, as to be unable to assist those people?

Monday, June 10th. The Marquis de Lafayette did not come till between eleven and twelve. He brought with him Major Ross. After breakfast, he told me (Major Ross being gone into another room), that he had seen Mr. Grenville lately, who asked him when he should go to America. That he had answered, "I have stayed here longer than I should otherwise have done, that I might see whether we were to have peace or war; but, as I see that the expectation of peace is a joke, and that you only amuse us without any real intention of treating, I think to stay no longer, but set out in a few days." On which Mr. Grenville assured him that it was no joke, that they were very sincere in their proposal of treating, and four or five days would convince the Marquis of it.

The Marquis then spoke to me about a request of Major Ross's in behalf of himself, Lord Chewton, a

lieutenant-colonel, and Lieutenant Haldane, who were aids-de-camp to Lord Cornwallis, that they too might be set at liberty with him. I told the Marquis, that he was better acquainted with the custom in such cases than I, and being himself one of the generals, to whom their parole had been given, he had more right to discharge it than I had, and that, if he judged it a thing proper to be done, I wished him to do it. He went into the bureau, saying he would write something, which he accordingly did, but it was not, as I expected, a discharge that he was to sign, it was for me to sign. And the Major not liking that which I had drawn for Lord Cornwallis, because there was a clause in it, reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of my act, went away without taking it. Upon which I the next morning wrote the following to Mr. Oswald.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

"Passy, 11 June, 1782.

"SIR,

"I did intend to have waited on you this morning to inquire after your health, and deliver the enclosed paper relating to the parole of Lord Cornwallis, but being obliged to go to Versailles, I must postpone my visit till to-morrow.

"I do not conceive that I have any authority in virtue of my office here, to absolve that parole in any degree; I have, therefore, endeavoured to found it as well as I could on the express power given me by Congress to exchange General Burgoyne for Mr. Laurens. A reservation is made of confirmation or disapprobation by Congress, not from any desire to restrain the entire liberty of that general, but because I think it

decent and my duty to make such reservation, and that I might otherwise be blamed as assuming a power not given me, if I undertook to discharge absolutely a parole given to Congress, without any authority from them for so doing. With great esteem and respect, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

I have received no answer from Mr. Laurens. The following is the paper mentioned in the above letter.

The Discharge of Lord Cornwallis from his Parole.

"The Congress having, by a resolution of the 14th of June last, empowered me to offer an exchange of General Burgoyne for the Honorable Henry Laurens, then a prisoner in the Tower of London, and whose liberty they much desire to obtain, which exchange, though proposed by me, according to the said resolution, had not been accepted or executed, when advice was received, that General Burgoyne was exchanged in virtue of another agreement; and Mr. Laurens thereupon having proposed another lieutenant-general, viz. Lord Cornwallis, as an exchange for himself, promising, that, if set at liberty, he would do his utmost to obtain a confirmation of that proposal; and Mr. Laurens being soon after discharged, and having since urged me earnestly, in several letters, to join with him in absolving the parole of that general, which appears to be a thing just and equitable in itself; and for the honor therefore of our country, I do hereby, as far as in my power lies, in virtue of the above resolution, or otherwise, absolve and discharge the parole of Lord Cornwallis, given by him in Virginia; setting him at entire liberty to act in his civil or military capacity, until the pleasure of Congress shall be known, to whom is reserved the confirmation or disapproba-

tion of this discharge, in case they have made, or shall intend to make, a different disposition.

"Given at Passy, this 9th day of June, 1782.

"B. FRANKLIN,

"*Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States of America to the Court of France.*"

I did not well comprehend the Major's conduct in refusing this paper. He was come express from London, to solicit the discharge of Lord Cornwallis's parole. He had said, that his Lordship was very anxious to obtain that discharge, being unhappy in his present situation. One of his objections to it was, that his Lordship, with such a limited discharge of his parole, could not enter into foreign service. He declared it was not his Lordship's intention to return to America. Yet he would not accept the paper, unless the reservation was omitted. I did not choose to make the alteration, and so he left it, not well pleased with me.

This day, *Tuesday, June 11th*, I was at Versailles, and had a good deal of conversation with M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council. I showed him the letters I had received by Mr. Oswald from Lord Shelburne, and related all the consequent conversation I had with Mr. Oswald. I related to him also the conversation I had had with Mr. Grenville. We concluded that the reason of his courier's not being returned, might be the formalities occasioning delay in passing the *Enabling Bill.*

I went down with him to the cabinet of Count de Vergennes, where all was repeated and explained. That minister seemed now to be almost persuaded, that the English court was sincere in its declarations of being desirous of peace. We spoke of all its attempts

to separate us, and of the prudence of our holding together and treating in concert. I made one remark, that, as they had shown so strong a desire of disuniting us, by large offers to each particular power, plainly in the view of dealing more advantageously with the rest, and had reluctantly agreed to make a general treaty, it was possible, that, after making a peace with all, they might pick out one of us to make war with separately. Against which project I thought it would not be amiss, if, before the treaties of peace were signed, we who were at war against England should enter into another treaty, engaging ourselves, that in such a case we should again make it a common cause, and renew the general war; which he seemed to approve of. He read Lord Shelburne's letter relating to Mr. Walpole, said that gentleman had attempted to open a negotiation through the Marquis de Castries, who had told him he was come to the wrong house, and should go to Count de Vergennes; but he never had appeared; that he was an intriguer, knew many people about the court, and was accustomed to manage his affairs by hidden and roundabout ways; but, said he, "When people have any thing to propose, that relates to my employment, I think they should come directly to me; my cabinet is the place where such affairs are to be treated." On the whole he seemed rather pleased that Mr. Walpole had not come to him, appearing not to like him.

I learned that Mr. Jay had taken leave, on the 7th past, of the Spanish ministers, in order to come hither, so that he may be daily expected; but I hear nothing of Mr. Laurens or Mr. Adams.

Wednesday, June 12th. I visited Mr. Oswald this morning. He said he had received the paper I had sent him, relating to the parole of Lord Cornwallis,

and had, by conversing with Major Ross, convinced him of his error in refusing it; that he saw I had done every thing that could be fairly desired of me, and said every thing in the paper that could give a weight to the temporary discharge, and tend to prevail with the Congress to confirm and complete it. Major Ross, coming in, made an apology for not having accepted it at first, declared his perfect satisfaction with it, and said, he was sure Lord Cornwallis would be very sensible of the favor. He then mentioned the custom among military people, that, in discharging the parole of a general, that of his aids was discharged at the same time. I answered, I was a stranger to the customs of the army, that I had made the most of the authority I had for exchanging General Burgoyne, by extending it as a foundation for the exchange of Lord Cornwallis, but that I had no shadow of authority for going further; that the Marquis de Lafayette, having been present when the parole was given, and one of the generals who received it, was, I thought, more competent to the discharge of it than myself; and I could do nothing in it. He went then to the Marquis, who, in the afternoon, sent me the drafts of a limited discharge, which he should sign, but requested my approbation of it, of which I made no difficulty, though I observed he had put into it that it was by my advice. He appears very prudently cautious of doing any thing, that may seem assuming a power that he is not vested with.

Friday, the 14th. M. Boeris called again, wishing to know if Mr. Grenville's courier was returned, and whether the treaty was like to go on. I could give him no information. He told me it was intended in Holland, in answer to the last Russian memorial, to say, that they could not now enter into a particular

treaty with England, that they thought it more glorious for her Imperial Majesty to be the mediatrix in a general treaty, and wished her to name the place. I said to him, "As you tell me their High Mightinesses are not well satisfied with Russia, and had rather avoid her mediation, would it not be better to omit the proposition, at least of her naming the place, especially as France, England, and America have already agreed to treat at Paris?" He replied, it might be better, but, says he, "we have no politicians among us." I advised him to write and get that omitted, as I understood it would be a week before the answer was concluded on. He did not seem to think his writing would be of much importance. I have observed, that his colleague, M. Vanderpierre, has a greater opinion by far of his own influence and consequence.

Saturday, June 15th. Mr. Oswald came out to breakfast with me. We afterwards took a walk in the garden, when he told me, that Mr. Grenville's courier returned last night. That he had received by him a letter from Mrs. Oswald, but not a line from the ministry, nor had he heard a word from them since his arrival, nor had he heard of any news brought by the courier. That he should have gone to see Mr. Grenville this morning, but he had omitted it, that gentleman being subject to morning headaches, which prevented his rising so early. I said, I supposed he would go to Versailles, and call on me in his return. We had but little farther discourse, having no new subject.

Mr. Oswald left me about noon, and soon after Mr. Grenville came, and acquainted me with the return of his courier, and that he had brought the full powers. That he, Mr. Grenville, had been at Versailles, and left a copy with Count de Vergennes. That the instrument was in the same terms with the former, ex-

cept that, after the power to treat with the King of France, or his ministers, there was an addition of words, importing a power to treat with the ministers of any other Prince or *State* whom it might concern. That Count de Vergennes had at first objected to these general words, as not being particular enough, but said, he would lay it before the King, and communicate it to the ministers of the belligerent powers, and that Mr. Grenville should hear from him on Monday. Mr. Grenville added, that he had further informed Count de Vergennes of his being now instructed to make a proposition as a basis for the intended treaty, viz. the peace of 1763; that the proposition intended to be made under his first powers, not being then received, was now changed, and, instead of proposing to allow the independence of America on condition of England's being put into the situation she was in at the peace of 1763, he was now authorized to *declare the Independence of America previous to the treaty*, as a voluntary act, and to propose separately as a basis the treaty of 1763. This also Count de Vergennes undertook to lay before the King, and communicate to me.

Mr. Grenville then said to me, he hoped all difficulties were now removed, and that we might proceed in the good work. I asked him if the Enabling Bill was passed? He said, No. It passed the Commons, and had been once read in the House of Lords, but was not yet completed. I remarked, that the usual time approached for the prorogation of Parliament, and possibly this business might be omitted. He said there was no danger of that, the Parliament would not rise this year till the middle of July; the India affairs had put back other business which must be done, and would require a prolongation of the session till that time. I then observed to him, that, though we Amer-

icans considered ourselves as a distinct independent power, or State, yet, as the British government had always, hitherto, affected to consider us only as rebellious subjects, and as the Enabling Act was not yet passed, I did not think it could be fairly supposed, that his court intended by the general words, *any other Prince or State*, to include a people whom they did not allow to be a State; and that, therefore, I doubted the sufficiency of his power as to treating with America, though it might be good as to Spain and Holland. He replied, that he himself had no doubt of the sufficiency of his power, and was willing to act upon it. I then desired to have a copy of the power, which he accordingly promised me.

He would have entered into conversation on the topic of reconciliation, but I chose still to wave it, till I should find the negotiation more certainly commenced; and I showed him the London paper containing the article above transcribed, that he might see how our conversations were misrepresented, and how hazardous it must be for me to make any propositions of the kind at present. He seemed to treat the newspapers lightly, as of no consequence; but I observed, that, before he had finished the reading of the article, he turned to the beginning of the paper to see the date, which made me suspect that he doubted whether it might not have taken its rise from some of his letters.

When he left me, I went to dine with M. de Chaumont, who had invited me to meet there Mr. Walpole, at his request. We shook hands, and he observed, that it was near two years since we had seen each other. Then, stepping aside, he thanked me for having communicated to him Lord Shelburne's letter to Mr. Oswald, thought it odd that Mr. Oswald himself had

not spoken to him about it; said he had received a letter from Mr. Fox upon the affair of St. Eustatia, in which there were some general words, expressing a desire of peace; that he had mentioned this to the Marquis de Castries, who had referred him to Count de Vergennes, but he did not think it a sufficient authority for him to go to that minister. It was known that he had business with the minister of the Marine on the other affair, and, therefore, his going to him was not taken notice of; but, if he had gone to Count de Vergennes, minister of Foreign Affairs, it would have occasioned speculation and much discourse; that he had therefore avoided it till he should be authorized, and had written accordingly to Mr. Fox; but that, in the mean time, Mr. Oswald had been chosen upon the supposition, that he, Mr. Walpole, and I were at variance. He spoke of Mr. Oswald as an odd kind of man, but that, indeed, his nation were generally odd people, &c. We dined pleasantly together with the family, and parted agreeably, without entering into any particulars of the business. Count d'Estaing was at this dinner, and I met him again in the evening at Madame Brillon's. There is at present among the people much censure of Count de Grasse's conduct, and a general wish that Count d'Estaing had the command in America. I avoid meddling, or even speaking on the subject, as improper for me, though I much esteem that commander.

Sunday, the 16th. I heard nothing from Versailles. I received a letter from Mr. Adams, acquainting me he had drawn upon me for a quarter's salary, which he hoped would be the last, as he now found himself in the way of getting some money there, though not much. But he says not a word in answer to my late letters on public affairs, nor have I any line from

Mr. Laurens, which I wonder at. I received also a letter from Mr. Carmichael, dated June 5th, at Madrid. He speaks of Mr. Jay being on his journey, and supposes he would be with me before that letter, so that I may expect him daily. We have taken lodgings for him in Paris.

Monday, the 17th. I received a letter from Mr. Hodgson, acquainting me that the American prisoners at Portsmouth, to the number of three hundred, were all embarked on board the transports, that each had received twenty shillings' worth of necessaries at the expense of government, and went on board in good humor; that contrary winds had prevented the transports arriving in time at Plymouth, but that the whole number there now of our people, amounting to seven hundred, with those arrived from Ireland, would soon be on their way home.

In the evening the Marquis de Lafayette came to see me, and said he had seen Count de Vergennes, who was satisfied with Mr. Grenville's powers. He asked me what I thought of them, and I told him what I had said to Mr. Grenville of their imperfection with respect to us. He agreed in opinion with me. I let him know that I proposed waiting on Count de Vergennes to-morrow.

He said he had signed the paper relating to Major Ross's parole, and hoped Congress would not take it amiss, and added, that, in conversation with the Major, he had asked him why England was so backward to make propositions. "We are afraid," says the Major, "of offering you more than you expect or desire." I find myself in some perplexity with regard to these two negotiators. Mr. Oswald appears to have been the choice of Lord Shelburne, Mr. Grenville that of Mr. Secretary Fox. Lord Shelburne is said to have lately

acquired much of the King's confidence. Mr. Fox calls himself the minister of the people, and it is certain that his popularity is lately much increased. Lord Shelburne seems to wish to have the management of the treaty; Mr. Fox seems to think it in his department. I hear that the understanding between these ministers is not quite perfect. Mr. Grenville is clever, and seems to feel reason as readily as Mr. Oswald, though not so ready to own it. Mr. Oswald appears quite plain and sincere; I sometimes a little doubt Mr. Grenville. Mr. Oswald, an old man, seems now to have no desire but that of being useful in doing good. Mr. Grenville, a young man, naturally desirous of acquiring reputation, seems to aim at that of being an able negotiator. Mr. Oswald does not solicit to have any share in the business, but, submitting the matter to Lord Shelburne and me, expresses only his willingness to serve, if we think he may be useful, and is equally willing to be excused, if we judge there is no occasion for him. Mr. Grenville seems to think the whole negotiation committed to him, and to have no idea of Mr. Oswald's being concerned in it, and is, therefore, willing to extend the expressions in his commission, so as to make them comprehend America, and this beyond what I think they will bear. I imagine we might, however, go on very well with either of them, though I should rather prefer Oswald; but I apprehend difficulties if they are both employed, especially if there is any misunderstanding between their principals. I must, however, write to Lord Shelburne, proposing something in consequence of his offer of vesting Mr. Oswald with any commission, which that gentleman and I should think proper.

Tuesday, the 18th. I found myself much indisposed a sudden and violent cold, attended with a fever-

ishness and headache. I imagined it to be an effect of the influenza, a disorder now reigning in various parts of Europe. This prevented my going to Versailles.

Thursday, the 20th. Weather excessively hot, and my disorder continues, but is lessened, the headache having left me. I am, however, not yet able to go to Versailles.

Friday, the 21st. I received the following note from the Marquis de Lafayette.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

"Versailles, Thursday morning, 20 June, 1782.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"Agreeably to your desire, I have waited upon the Count de Vergennes, and said to him what I had in command from your Excellency. He intends taking the King's orders this morning, and expects he will be able to propose to Mr. Grenville a meeting for to-morrow, when he will have time to explain himself respecting France and her allies, that he may make an official communication both to the King and the allied ministers. What Count de Vergennes can make out of this conversation will be communicated by him to your Excellency, in case you are able to come. In the other case I shall wait upon you to-morrow evening with every information I can collect. I have the honor to be, very respectfully, &c.

"LAFAYETTE."

In the evening the Marquis called upon me, and acquainted me, that Mr. Grenville had been with Count de Vergennes, but could not inform me what had passed.

Saturday, the 22d. Messrs. Oswald and Whitefoord

came and breakfasted with me. Mr. Oswald had received no letters or instructions. I told him I would write to Lord Shelburne respecting him, and call on him on Monday morning to breakfast, and show him what I proposed to write, that it might receive such alterations as he should judge proper.

Sunday, the 23d. In the afternoon Mr. Jay arrived, to my great satisfaction. I proposed going with him the next morning to Versailles, and presenting him to M. de Vergennes. He informed me, that the Spanish ministers had been much struck with the news from England, respecting the resolutions of Parliament to discontinue the war in America, &c., and that they had since been extremely civil to him, and he understood intended to send instructions to their ambassador at this court, to make the long talked of treaty with him here.

Monday, the 24th. Wrote a note of excuse to Mr. Oswald, promising to see him on Wednesday, and went with Mr. Jay to Versailles. Count de Vergennes acquainted us, that he had given to Mr. Grenville the answer to his propositions, who had immediately despatched it to his court. He read it to us, and I shall endeavour to obtain a copy of it. Count de Vergennes informing us, that a frigate was about to be despatched for America, by which we might write, and that the courier who was to carry down the despatches would set out on Wednesday morning, we concluded to omit coming to court on Tuesday, in order to prepare our letters. Count de Vergennes appeared to have some doubts about the sincerity of the British court, and the *bonne foi* of Mr. Grenville, but said the return of Mr. Grenville's courier might give light. I wrote the following letters to Mr. Secretary Livingston and Mr. Morris.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

"Passy, 25 June, 1782.

"SIR,

"I have received your respective letters of January 26th* and February 13th. The first was accompanied with a form of a convention for the establishment of consuls. Mr. Barclay having been detained these six months in Holland, though in continual expectation of returning hither, I have yet done nothing in that business, thinking his presence might be of use in settling it. As soon as he arrives I shall move the completion of it.

"The second enforces some resolutions of Congress, sent me with it, respecting a loan of twelve millions of livres, to be demanded of France for the current year. I had already received the promise of six millions, together with the clearest and most positive assurances, that it was all the King could spare to us, that we must not expect more, that, if drafts and demands came upon me beyond that sum, it behoved me to take care how I accepted them, or where I should find funds for the payment, since I could certainly not be further assisted out of the royal treasury. Under this declaration, with what face could I ask for another six millions? It would be saying, you are not to be believed, you can spare more; you are able to lend me twice the sum if you were but willing. If you read my letter to Mr. Morris of this date, I think you will be convinced how improper any language, capable of such a construction, would be to such a friend. I hope, however, that the loan Mr. Adams has opened in Holland for three millions of florins, which it is said is likely to succeed, will supply the deficiency.

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 294.

"By the newspapers I have sent, you will see, that the general disposition of the British nation towards us had been changed. Two persons have been sent here by the new ministers, to propose treating for peace. They had at first some hopes of getting the belligerent powers to treat separately, one after another; but, finding that impracticable, they have, after several messengers sent to and fro, come to a resolution of treating with all together for a general peace, and have agreed, that the place shall be Paris. Mr. Grenville is now here with full powers for that purpose, (if they can be reckoned full with regard to America, till a certain act is completed for enabling his Majesty to treat, &c., which has gone through the Commons, and has been once read in the House of Lords.) I keep a very particular journal of what passes every day in the affair, which is transcribing, to be sent to you. I shall, therefore, need to say no more about it in this letter, except, that though I still think they were sincere at first in their desire of peace, yet, since their success in the West Indies, I imagine, that I see marks of their desiring rather to draw the negotiations into length, that they may take the chance of what the campaign shall produce in their favor; and, as there are so many interests to adjust, it will be prudent for us to suppose, that even another campaign may pass before all can be agreed. Something, too, may happen to break off the negotiations, and we should be prepared for the worst.

"I hoped for the assistance of Mr. Adams and Mr. Laurens. The first is too much engaged in Holland to come hither, and the other declines serving; but I have now the satisfaction of being joined by Mr. Jay, who happily arrived here from Madrid last Sunday. The Marquis de Lafayette is of great use in our

affairs here, and, as the campaign is not likely to be very active in North America, I wish I may be able to prevail with him to stay a few weeks longer. By him you will receive the journal above mentioned, which is already pretty voluminous, and yet the negotiations cannot be said to be opened.

"Ireland, you will see, has obtained all her demands triumphantly. I meet no one from that country, who does not express some obligations to America for their success.

"Before I received your just observations on the subject, I had obtained from the English ministers a resolution to exchange all our prisoners. They thought themselves obliged to have an act of Parliament about it for authorizing the King to do it, this war being different from others, as made by an act of Parliament declaring us rebels, and our people being committed for high treason. I empowered Mr. Hodgson, who was chairman of the committee that collected and dispensed the charitable subscriptions for the American prisoners, to treat and conclude on the terms of their discharge; and, having approved of the draft he sent me of the agreement, I hope Congress will see fit to order a punctual execution of it. I have long suffered with those poor brave men, who with so much public virtue have endured four or five years hard imprisonment, rather than serve against their country. I have done all I could afford towards making their situation more comfortable; but their numbers were so great, that I could do but little for each, and that very great villain, Digges, defrauded them of between three and four hundred pounds, which he drew from me on their account. He lately wrote me a letter, in which he pretended he was coming to settle with me, and to convince me, that I had been mistaken with regard

to his conduct; but he never appeared, and I hear he is gone to America. Beware of him, for he is very artful, and has cheated many. I hear every day of new rogueries committed by him in England.

"The ambassador from Sweden to this court applied to me lately to know, if I had powers that would authorize my making a treaty with his master in behalf of the United States. Recollecting a general power, that was formerly given to me with the other Commissioners, I answered in the affirmative. He seemed much pleased, and said the King had directed him to ask the question, and charged him to tell me, that he had so great esteem for me, that it would be a particular satisfaction to him to have such a transaction with me. I have perhaps some vanity in repeating this; but I think, too, that it is right that Congress should know it, and judge if any use may be made of the reputation of a citizen for the public service. In case it should be thought fit to employ me in that business, it will be well to send a more particular power and proper instructions. The ambassador added, that it was a pleasure to him to think, and he hoped it would be remembered, that Sweden was the first power in Europe, which had voluntarily offered its friendship to the United States without being solicited. This affair should be talked of as little as possible till completed.

"I enclose another complaint from Denmark, which I request you will lay before Congress. I am continually pestered with complaints from French seamen, who were with Captain Conyngham in his first cruise from Dunkirk; from others who were in the *Lexington*, the *Alliance*, &c., being put on board prizes that were retaken, were never afterwards able to join their respective ships, and so have been deprived of the

wages, &c. due to them. It is for our national honor, that justice should be done them, if possible; and I wish you to procure an order of Congress for inquiring into their demands, and satisfying such as shall be found just. It may be addressed to the consul.

"I enclose a note from M. de Vergennes to me, accompanied by a memoir relating to a Swiss, who died at Edenton. If you can procure the information desired, it will much oblige the French ambassador in Switzerland.

"I have made the addition you directed to the cipher. I rather prefer the old one of Dumas, perhaps because I am more used to it. I enclose several letters from that ancient and worthy friend of our country. He is now employed as secretary to Mr. Adams, and I must, from a long experience of his zeal and usefulness, beg leave to recommend him warmly to the consideration of Congress, with regard to his appointments, which have never been equal to his merit. As Mr. Adams writes me the good news, that he shall no longer be obliged to draw on me for his salary, I suppose it will be proper to direct his paying that, which shall be allowed to M. Dumas. Be pleased to present my duty to the Congress, and believe me to be, with great esteem and regard,

"B. FRANKLIN."

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

"Passy, 25 June, 1782.

"SIR,

—— "For what relates to war and peace, I must refer you to Mr. Livingston, to whom I write fully. I will only say, that, though the English a few months since seemed desirous of peace, I suspect they now intend to draw out the negotiation into length, till they can

see what this campaign will produce. I hope our people will not be deceived by fair words, but be on their guard, ready against every attempt that our insidious enemies may make upon us. I am, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

Wednesday, the 26th. I sent away my letters, and went to see Mr. Oswald. I showed him the draft of a letter to be addressed to him instead of Lord Shelburne, respecting the commission, or public character, he might hereafter be vested with. This draft was founded on Lord Shelburne's memorandums, which Mr. Oswald had shown to me, and this letter was intended to be communicated by him to Lord Shelburne. Mr. Oswald liked the mode, but rather chose that no mention should be made of his having shown me Lord Shelburne's memorandums, though he thought they were given to him for that purpose. So I struck that part out, and new modelled the letter, which I sent him the next day, as follows.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

"Passy, 27 June, 1782.

"SIR,

"The opinion I have of your candor, probity, and good understanding, and good will to both countries, made me hope you would have been vested with the character of plenipotentiary to treat with those from America. When Mr. Grenville produced his first commission, which was only to treat with France, I did imagine that the other to treat with us was reserved for you, and kept only till the Enabling Bill should be passed. Mr. Grenville nas since received a second commission, which, as he informs me, has additional words, empowering him to treat with the ministers of

any other *Prince* or *State* whom it may concern; and he seems to understand, that those general words comprehend the United States of America. There may be no doubt, that they may comprehend Spain and Holland; but, as there exist various public acts, by which the government of Britain denies us to be states, and none in which they acknowledge us to be such, it seems hardly clear that we could be intended at the time the commission was given, the Enabling Act not being then passed. So that, though I can have no objection to Mr. Grenville, nor right to make it, if I had any, yet, as your long residence in America has given you a knowledge of that country, its people, circumstances, commerce, &c., which, added to your experience in business, may be useful to both sides in facilitating and expediting the negotiation, I cannot but hope, that it is still intended to vest you with the character above mentioned, respecting the treaty with America, either separately or in conjunction with Mr. Grenville, as to the wisdom of your ministers may seem best. Be it as it may, I beg you would accept this line as a testimony of the sincere esteem and respect with which, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN." *

* In conformity to Dr. Franklin's suggestion, previously made to Mr. Oswald, the British ministry appointed separate commissions to negotiate treaties of peace, as appears by the following extract from a letter written by the Earl of Shelburne to Mr. Oswald.

"I hope to receive early assurances from you, that my confidence in the sincerity and good faith of Dr. Franklin has not been misplaced, and that he will concur with you in endeavouring to render effectual the great work, in which our hearts and wishes are so equally interested. You will observe, that we have adopted his idea of the method to come to a general pacification by treating separately with each party. I cannot but entertain a firm reliance, that the appointment of the particular Commissioners will be no less satisfactory to him. He has very lately warranted me to depend upon that effect in the instance of your

Friday, June 28th. M. de Rayneval called upon me, and acquainted me, that the ministers had received intelligence from England, that, besides the orders given to General Carleton to propose terms of reunion to America, artful emissaries were sent over, to go through the country and stir up the people to call on the Congress to accept those terms, they being similar to those settling with Ireland; that it would, therefore, be well for Mr. Jay and me to write and caution Congress against these practices. He said Count de Vergennes wished also to know what I had written respecting the negotiation, as it would be well for us to hold pretty near the same language. I told him, that I did not apprehend the least danger that such emissaries would meet with any success, or that the Congress would make any treaty with General Carleton; that I would, however, write as he desired; and Mr. Jay, coming in, promised the same. He said the courier would go to-morrow. I accordingly wrote as follows to Mr. Secretary Livingston, and to my friend Dr. Cooper.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

"Passy, 28 June, 1782.

"SIR,

"In mine of the 25th instant, I omitted mentioning, that, at the repeated, earnest instances of Mr. Laurens,

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nomination, and he will not be surprised at the choice of your colleague, Mr. Jackson, when he considers how very conversant Mr. Jackson is with the subject of America, and how very sincere a friend he has uniformly shown himself to be to the reëstablishment of peace and harmony between that country and this." — *Whitehall, June 30th*, 1782. *MS.*

Mr. Richard Jackson, who was associated with Mr. Oswald in the commission, had been long connected with Dr. Franklin in the transaction of Pennsylvania affairs in England, and is often mentioned in the earlier parts of this correspondence. It is uncertain whether he accepted the appointment of commissioner. At any rate, he did not go to Paris, nor take any part in the negotiation.

who had given such expectations to the ministry in England, when his parole or securities were discharged, as that he could not think himself at liberty to act in public affairs, till the parole of Lord Cornwallis was absolved by me in exchange, I sent to that general the paper, of which the enclosed is a copy; and I see, by the English papers, that his Lordship, immediately on the receipt of it, appeared at court, and has taken his seat in the House of Peers, which he did not before think was warrantable. My authority for doing this appeared questionable to myself; but Mr. Laurens judged it deducible from that respecting General Burgoyne, and, by his letters to me, seemed so unhappy till it was done, that I ventured it, with a clause, however, as you will see, reserving to Congress the approbation or disallowance of it.

"The Enabling Act is now said to be passed, but no copy of it is yet received here, so that, as the bill first printed has suffered alterations in passing through Parliament, and we know not what they are, the treaty with us is not yet commenced. Mr. Grenville expects his courier in a few days, with the answer of his court to a paper given him on the part of this. That answer will probably afford us a clearer understanding of the intentions of the British ministry, which for some weeks past have appeared somewhat equivocal and uncertain. It looks as if, since their late success in the West Indies, they a little repented of the advances they had made in their declarations respecting the acknowledgment of our independence; and we have pretty good information, that some of the ministers still flatter the King with the hope of recovering his sovereignty over us, on the same terms as are now making with Ireland. However willing we might have been, at the commencement of this contest, to have accepted

such conditions, be assured we can have no safety in them at present. The King hates us most cordially. If he is once admitted to any degree of power and government among us, however limited, it will soon be extended by corruption, artifice, and force, till we are reduced to absolute subjection, and that the more easily, as, by receiving him again for our King, we shall draw upon us the contempt of all Europe, who now admire and respect us, and shall never again find a friend to assist us.

"There are, it is said, great divisions in the ministry on other points as well as this, and those who aim at engrossing the power, flatter the King with this project of reunion, and, it is said, have much reliance on the operations of private agents sent into America to dispose minds there in favor of it, and to bring about a separate treaty there with General Carleton. I have not the least apprehension, that Congress will give in to this scheme, it being inconsistent with our treaties, as well as with our interest; but I think it will be well to watch the emissaries, and secure, or banish immediately, such as shall be found tampering and stirring up the people to call for it.

"The firm, united resolution of France, Spain, and Holland, joined with ours, not to treat of a particular, but a general peace, notwithstanding the separate tempting offers to each, will in the end give us the command of that peace. Every one of the other powers sees clearly its interest in this, and persists in that resolution. The Congress, I am persuaded, are as clear-sighted as any of them, and will not depart from the system, which has been attended with so much success, and promises to make America soon both great and happy.

"I have just received a letter from Mr. Laurens, dated

at Lyons, on his journey into the south of France for his health. Mr. Jay will write also by this opportunity. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

"B. FRANKLIN."

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

"Passy, 28 June, 1782.

——"Our public affairs are in a good situation here. England, having tried in vain to make a separate peace with each of the powers she is at war with, has at length agreed to treat for a general peace with them all together; and at Paris. If we all continue firm in the resolution not to separate, we shall command the terms. I have no doubt of this steadiness here; and though we are told, that endeavours are making on your side the water to induce America to a reunion, on the terms now granting to Ireland, and that powers are sent to General Carleton for that purpose, I am persuaded the danger of this project will appear so evident, that, if offered, it will be immediately rejected. We have no safety but in our independence; with that we shall be respected, and soon become great and happy. Without it, we shall be despised, lose all our friends, and then either be cruelly oppressed by the King, who hates, and is incapable of forgiving us, or, having all that nation's enemies for ours, shall sink with it. I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN."

M. de Rayneval, who is Secretary to the Council of State, called again in the evening. I gave him copies of the three preceding letters to peruse and show to Count de Vergennes, to convince him that we held no underhand dealings here. I own I had, at the

same time, another view in it, which was, that they should see I had been ordered to demand further aids, and had forborne to make the demands, with my reasons, hoping, that, if they could possibly help us to more money, they might be induced to do it.

I had never made any visit to Count d'Aranda, the Spanish ambassador, for reasons before mentioned. M. de Rayneval told Mr. Jay and me this morning, that it would be well for us to wait on him, and he had authority to assure us, we should be well received. We accordingly concluded to wait on his Excellency the next morning.

Saturday, June 29th. We went together to the Spanish ambassador's, who received us with great civility and politeness. He spoke with Mr. Jay on the subject of the treaty they were to make together, and mentioned in general, as a principle, that the two powers should consider each other's conveniency, and accommodate and compensate each other as well as they could. That an exact compensation might, perhaps, not be possible, but should be approached as nearly as the nature of things would admit. "Thus," says he, "if there is a certain thing which would be convenient to each of us, but more convenient to one than to the other, it should be given to the one to whom it would be most convenient, and compensation made by giving another thing to the other, for the same reason." I suppose he had in view something relating to boundaries or territories, because, he added, we will sit down together with maps in our hands, and, by that means, shall see our way more clearly. I learned from him, that the expedition against Providence had sailed, but no advice was yet received of its success. On our going out, he took pains himself to open the folding doors for us, which is a high compliment here;

and told us he would return our visit (*rendre son devoir*), and then fix a day with us for dining with him. I dined with Mr. Jay and a company of Americans at his lodgings.

Sunday, July 1st. Mr. Grenville called on me.*

CORRESPONDENCE CONTINUED.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Delays in the Opening of the Negotiation. — Suggests Doubts of the Sincerity of the British Ministry.

Passy, 2 July, 1782.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me from Lyons, the 24th past.

I wonder a little at Mr. —— not acquainting you whether your name was in the Commission or not. I begin to suspect, from various circumstances, that the British ministry, elated perhaps too much by the success of Admiral Rodney, are not in earnest to treat immediately, but rather wish delay. They seem to hope, that further successes may enable them to treat more advantageously; or, as some suppose, that certain propositions to be made to Congress by General Carleton may render a treaty here with us unnecessary. A little bad news, which it is possible they may yet receive from the same quarter, will contribute to set them right; and then we may enter seriously

* Dr. Franklin's journal closes here. His ill state of health seems to have been the chief cause of his discontinuing it.

upon the treaty; otherwise I conjecture it may not take place till after another campaign. Mr. Jay is arrived here. Mr. Grenville and Mr. Oswald continue here. Mr. Oswald has yet received no commission; and that of Mr. Grenville does not very clearly comprehend us, according to British ideas; therefore it requires explication. When I know more, you shall have further information.*

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* *From Richard Oswald to the Earl of Shelburne.* — "I beg leave under this cover to transmit to your Lordship a letter directed to myself from Dr. Franklin, which he sent to me on the 27th of June, the day it is dated; and I will also take notice of what passed between him and me in consequence of it.

"I have kept it in my hands until now, to go by the return of the first courier that arrives, which Mr. Grenville has been expecting daily. But, as none had appeared, and thinking the Doctor could have no meaning in putting such a letter into my hands, but with a view to its being forwarded to your Lordship, and might perhaps be disappointed or disobliged, if delayed, I thought it right to let him know that it was not sent, and the reason of its still remaining in my hands on that account; and, wishing to have an opportunity of talking to him on the subject of it, I went to his house on Saturday the 6th instant, and stayed with him about an hour.

"After thanking him for his good opinion of me, as expressed in that letter, and giving the reason for its not being forwarded, I told him that this interval of delay had given occasion to sundry questions in my own mind, as to the business we should have to treat about, in case I should be appointed, and should undertake the office he was pleased to recommend in that letter. With France and the other parties, I was sensible there must be many points to be settled. But with respect to the colonies, I told him I could not easily conceive how there could arise any variety of subject to treat upon. That, as to a final conclusion, the treaty with France might make it necessary to wait the event of a determination as to them, so as both might be included in one settlement; but, until then, I could not see there would be much field for negotiation between Great Britain and the Commissioners of the colonies, after their independence had been granted; and which being in a manner acknowledged, I had been in hopes there remained no questions of either side that would require much discussion. If he thought it would be otherwise, I told him I would be much obliged to him to give me a hint of them, as the questions could not but be material to me, in considering whether I might venture upon such a charge. That this I would request of him as a friend, and I

Not having an immediate answer to what I wrote you, concerning the absolution of Lord Cornwallis's parole, and Major Ross coming over hither from him to press it, I gave him the discharge you desired.

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hoped I might also expect of him as a friend to England, which I must still suppose him to be; and in which I was not singular, believing it was the universal opinion at home, and particularly with regard to your Lordship, who, I had reason to be assured, had the greatest confidence in his good intentions towards our country. That I did not just then desire or expect an answer, but if he would name any other day I should wait on him, in hopes of having his opinion and advice upon the particular subject of this colony treaty, and his sentiments in general upon the whole of these affairs, which I was certain would be of service in guiding us how to proceed, in the safest and quickest course, to a final conclusion of this unhappy business.

"That I had too just a notion of his character, to expect any information but such as would not be inconsistent with particular engagements. But, where that did not interfere, his granting the favor I asked might be doing a good office to all parties concerned. For I could not help thinking, that the Commissioners of the colonies had it much in their power to give despatch to the general treaty, and to end it on just and reasonable terms, even notwithstanding their particular treaty with France. Upon this, the Doctor said they had no treaty with France, but what was published. I said, I was glad it was so, since I saw nothing there, however guarded against a separate peace, that should direct or control the conditions of a treaty between them and Great Britain, excepting the provision for the great article of independence, which was now out of the question.

"That whatever advice or hints (regarding that purpose) the Doctor would be pleased to give me, I would make no indiscreet use of, but would pledge my honor that they should be strictly kept under such directions of communication as he should think fit to prescribe.

"After allowing me to go on in this way, he said, there were some things which he wished England to think of, or to agree to, (I forget which), and yet he should not like that they were known to have been suggested by him. At last he told me, if I would come out to his house on Wednesday the 10th, he would show me a minute of some things, which he thought might be deserving of notice upon the occasion. If we agreed in opinion, it was so far well; if not, that I should let him know, and he would be glad to have my opinion, and, where we agreed, I might make use of his sentiments as my own to any good purpose I might think proper.

"I forgot to mention, that I told the Doctor, that I would write to your Lordship by the first courier, for leave to return for some time to England, and wished he might give me something to carry that

Enclosed I send you a copy. I hear it has proved satisfactory to him; I hope it will be so to you. Believe me to be, with great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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might be acceptable to your Lordship. I shall be better able to judge, after I have seen him on Wednesday. He again mentioned Canada, and said, there would be no solid peace while it remained an English colony." — *Paris, July 8th. MS. Letter.*

Two days afterwards, Mr. Oswald wrote another long despatch to the Earl of Shelburne, detailing his conversations with Dr. Franklin. Such extracts are given below, as contain the chief points of these conversations. They are remarkable as showing, *that all the prominent articles of the treaty, as it was finally agreed to and ratified, were proposed and insisted on by him, before Mr. Oswald had seen either of the other American Commissioners.*

From Richard Oswald to the Earl of Shelburne. — "In consequence of Dr. Franklin's appointment, as mentioned in my letter of the 8th under this cover, I went out to his house this morning, and stayed with him near two hours, with a view of obtaining the information and advice I wished for, as to the terms and conditions upon which he thought the treaty between Great Britain and the Commissioners of the colonies might be carrying on, and proceed to a conclusion. Having reminded him of what he in a manner promised on the 6th, he took out a minute, and read from it a few hints or articles; some, he said, as *necessary* for them to insist on; others, which he could not say he had any orders about, or were not absolutely demanded, and yet such as it would be *advisable* for England to offer for the sake of reconciliation and her future interest, viz.

"1st. Of the first class, *necessary* to be granted; independence, full and complete in every sense, to the Thirteen States; and all troops to be withdrawn from thence.

"2dly. A settlement of the boundaries of *their* colonies and the loyal colonies.

"3dly. A confinement of the boundaries of Canada; at least to what they were before the last Act of Parliament, I think in 1774, if not to a still more contracted state, on an ancient footing.

"4thly. A freedom of fishing on the Bank of Newfoundland and elsewhere, as well for fish as whales. I own I wondered he should have thought it necessary to ask for this privilege.

"He did not mention the leave of drying fish on shore in Newfoundland, and I said nothing of it. I do not remember any more articles, which he said they would insist on, or what he called necessary to them, to be granted.

"Then, as to the *advisable* articles, or such as he would, as a friend, recommend to be offered by England; viz.

"1st. To indemnify many people, who had been ruined by towns

FROM THOMAS POWNALL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Proposition for Peace.

Richmond Hill, 5 July, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have, by my friend Mr. Hobart, sent a printed copy of the three *Memorials*, which I published on the sub-

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burnt and destroyed. The whole might not exceed five or six hundred thousand pounds. I was struck at this. However, the Doctor said, though it was a large sum, it would not be ill bestowed, as it would conciliate the resentment of a multitude of poor sufferers, who could have no other remedy, and who, without some relief, would keep up a spirit of secret revenge and animosity for a long time to come against Great Britain; whereas a voluntary offer of such reparation would diffuse a universal calm and conciliation over the whole country.

"2dly. Some sort of acknowledgment, in some public act of Parliament or otherwise, of our error in distressing those countries so much as we had done. A few words of that kind, the Doctor said, would do more good than people could imagine.

"3dly. Colony ships and trade to be received, and have the same privileges in Britain and Ireland, as British ships and trade. I did not ask any explanation on that head for the present. British and Irish ships in the colonies to be in like manner on the same footing with their own ships.

"4thly. Giving up every part of Canada.

"If there were any other articles of either kind, I cannot now recollect them; but I do not think there were any of material consequence, and I perhaps was the less attentive in the enumeration, as it had been agreed to give me the whole in writing. But, after some reflection, the Doctor said, he did not like to give such writing out of his hands; and, hesitating a good deal about it, asked me if I had seen Mr. Jay, the other commissioner, lately come from Madrid. I said, I had not. He then told me, it would be proper I should see him, and he would fix a time for our meeting, and seemed to think he should want to confer with him himself before he gave a final answer. I told him, if I had such final answer, and had leave, I would carry it over to England. He said that would be right, but that, as Mr. Grenville told him he expected another courier in four or five days, I had better wait so long, and he would write along with me.

"Upon the whole, the Doctor expresses himself in a friendly way towards England, and was not without hopes, that, if we should settle on this occasion in the way he wished, England would not only have a beneficial intercourse with the colonies, but at last it might end in a federal union between them. In the mean time we ought to take

ject of America, one addressed to the Sovereigns of Europe, and two others addressed to the Sovereign of Great Britain.

I hope you received my letter of May 13th, 1782, forwarded by Mr. Bridgen.

As it is possible you may see Mr. Hobart, he can inform you from me, as well as of his own knowledge,

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care, not to force them into the hands of other people. He showed me a copy of the *Enabling Bill*, as it is called, and said, he observed the word, '*revolted*,' was left out, and likewise added, that the purpose of it was to dispense with acts of Parliament, which they were indifferent about, and that now they were better prepared for war, and more able to carry it on than ever they were. That he had heard we entertained some expectation of retaining some sort of sovereignty over them, as his Majesty had of Ireland; and that, if we thought so, we should find ourselves much disappointed, for they would yield to nothing of that sort.

"From this conversation, I have some hopes, my Lord, that it is possible to put an end to the American quarrel in a short time, and when that is done, I have a notion that the treaty with the other powers will go more smoothly on. The Doctor did not, in the course of the above conversation, hesitate as to a conclusion with them, on account of any connexion with those other states; and in general seemed to think their American affairs must be ended by a separate commission. On these occasions I said, I supposed, in case of such a commission, he meant that the power of granting independence would be therein expressly mentioned. He said, 'No doubt.' I hinted this, thinking it better in the power of treating to include independence, than to grant independence separately, and then to treat about other matters with the commissioners of such independent States; who by such grant are on the same footing with ministers of other powers. I did not perceive he made any account of this distinction, and I did not think proper to say any thing more about it.

"I forgot one thing the Doctor said with respect to some provision, or reparation, to those called the loyal sufferers. It would be impossible to make any such provision. They were so numerous, and their cases so various, that he could not see that it could make any part of the treaty. There might be particular cases that deserved compassion. These being left to the several States, they might perhaps do something for them. But they, as Commissioners, could do nothing. He then read to me the orders in Carolina for confiscating and selling of estates under the direction of the military, by which so great a number of families had been ruined; and which the people there felt so much as would stifle their compassion for the sufferers on the other side."—*Paris, July 10th. MS. Letter.*

of the steps we took upon the ground of your communications to him and me; "that there were persons authorized to treat of peace, and that such persons were willing to give to reasonable measures, taken to that end, every assistance in their power." He can inform you also of the circumstances which attended those steps; and of the effect which they *missed in the direct line, as of the effect they actually have in an oblique one.* As from the beginning of this matter, of trying to bring on negotiation for peace, I considered him as joined with me, in our endeavours; so I have given to him a memorandum, which I made on the course of this business. He will communicate to you every thing, which is not improper for a man of honor to communicate to the minister of a people at war with us; nor will he abstain from communicating any thing, which that minister, wishing peace to our country, ought to be apprized of, respecting the effects of his friendly offers. He will do every thing which a man of honor ought to do, and he will do nothing that a man of honor ought not to do.

I have desired him to give a paper of queries respecting *modes* and *terms* of settling in America, which people of this old world, and of the old country, may in future be admitted to receive. I am, not only for my friends, but personally interested, to gain information on that head; and, as I wish that which will not deceive them or myself, I apply to you.

May God send peace on earth. I hope, among the general blessings it will bring, it will restore me to the communication and enjoyment of my old and long valued friendship with you. May you live to see, and have health to enjoy, the blessings which I hope it may please God to make you the instrument of communicating to mankind. I am, &c.

T. Pownall.

TO JAMES HUTTON.

Moravian Indians.

Passy, 7 July, 1782.

MY OLD AND DEAR FRIEND,

A letter written by you to M. Bertin, *Ministre d'Etat*, containing an account of the abominable murders committed by some of the frontier people on the poor Moravian Indians, has given me infinite pain and vexation. The dispensations of Providence in this world puzzle my weak reason; I cannot comprehend, why cruel men should have been permitted thus to destroy their fellow creatures. Some of the Indians may be supposed to have committed sins, but one cannot think the little children had committed any worthy of death. Why has a single man in England, who happens to love blood and to hate Americans, been permitted to gratify that bad temper by hiring German murderers, and, joining them with his own, to destroy in a continued course of bloody years near one hundred thousand human creatures, many of them possessed of useful talents, virtues, and abilities, to which he has no pretension? It is he who has furnished the savages with hatchets and scalping knives, and engages them to fall upon our defenceless farmers, and murder them with their wives and children, paying for their scalps, of which the account kept in America already amounts, as I have heard, to near *two thousand!*

Perhaps the people of the frontiers, exasperated by the cruelties of the Indians, have been induced to kill all Indians that fall into their hands without distinction; so that even these horrid murders of our poor Moravians may be laid to his charge. And yet this man lives, enjoys all the good things this world can

afford, and is surrounded by flatterers, who keep even his conscience quiet by telling him he is the best of Princes! I wonder at this, but I cannot therefore part with the comfortable belief of a Divine Providence; and the more I see the impossibility, from the number and extent of his crimes, of giving equivalent punishment to a wicked man in this life, the more I am convinced of a future state, in which all that here appears to be wrong shall be set right, all that is crooked made straight. In this faith let you and me, my dear friend, comfort ourselves; it is the only comfort, in the present dark scene of things, that is allowed us.

I shall not fail to write to the government of America, urging that effectual care may be taken to protect and save the remainder of those unhappy people.

Since writing the above, I have received a Philadelphia paper, containing some account of the same horrid transaction, a little different, and some circumstances alleged as excuses or palliations, but extremely weak and insufficient. I send it to you enclosed. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 9 July, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have the honor to inform you, that Mr. Grenville's express is arrived this morning, by way of Ostend. The gentleman is gone to Versailles. I fancy he will wait upon you, and I will be much obliged to you to let me know what your opinion is. I am going to St. Germain; but, if any intelligence comes to hand, I will communicate it as soon as possible. I rest respectfully and affectionately yours.

LAFAYETTE.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Passy, 9 July, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Grenville has been with me in his return from Versailles. He tells me, that, Lord Rockingham being dead, Lord Shelburne is appointed First Lord of the Treasury, and that Mr. Fox has resigned; so that both the secretaryships are vacant; that his communication to Count de Vergennes was only, that no change was thereby made in the dispositions of that court for peace, &c., and he expects another courier, with fuller instructions, in a few days. As soon as I hear more, I shall acquaint you with it. I am ever, with great respect and affection, your most obedient humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Complains of the Delay in opening the Negotiation. — Manuscript of a French Peasant.

Passy, 10 July, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of the 26th past by Mr. Young, and am indebted to you for some preceding. I do not know why the good work of peace goes on so slowly on your side. Some have imagined that your ministers, since Rodney's success, are desirous of trying fortune a little further before they conclude the war; others, that they have not a good understanding with each other. What I have just heard seems to countenance this opinion. It is said, Mr. Fox has resigned. We are ready here, on the part of America, to enter into treaty with you in concurrence with our

allies, and are disposed to be very reasonable; but, if your *plenipotentiary*, notwithstanding that character, is upon every proposition obliged to send a courier and wait an answer, we shall not soon see the happy conclusion. It has been suspected, too, that you wait to hear the effect of some overtures, sent by General Carleton for a separate peace with America. A vessel just arrived from Maryland brings us the unanimous resolutions of their Assembly, for continuing the war at all hazards, rather than violate their faith with France. This is a sample of the success to be expected from such a measure, if it has really been taken, which I hardly believe.

There is methinks a point that has been too little considered in treaties, the means of making them durable. An honest peasant, from the mountains of Provence, brought me the other day a manuscript he had written on the subject, and which he could not procure permission to print. It appeared to me to have much good sense in it; and therefore I got some copies to be struck off for him to distribute where he may think fit. I send you one enclosed. This man aims at no profit from his pamphlet or his project, asks for nothing, expects nothing, and does not even desire to be known. He has acquired, he tells me, a fortune of near one hundred and fifty crowns a year (about eighteen pounds sterling), with which he is content. This you may imagine would not afford the expense of riding to Paris, so he came on foot; such was his zeal for peace, and the hope of forwarding and securing it, by communicating his ideas to great men here. His rustic and poor appearance has prevented his access to them, or his obtaining their attention; but he does not seem yet to be dis-

couraged. I honor much the character of this *véritable philosophe.*

I thank you much for your letters of May the 1st, 13th, and 25th, with your proposed preliminaries. It is a pleasure to me, to find our sentiments so concurring on points of importance; it makes discussions as unnecessary as they might between us be inconvenient. I am, my dear Sir, with great esteem and affection, yours ever, B. FRANKLIN.

TO BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

Plan of Lord Shelburne to retain the Sovereignty of the King over America, with an independent Parliament in that Country. — The Plan impracticable.

Passy, 11 July, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

In mine of yesterday, which went by Mr. Young, I made no mention of yours of May 11th, it not being before me. I have just found it.

You speak of a "proposed dependent State of America, which you thought Mr. Oswald would begin with." As yet, I have heard nothing of it. I have all along understood (perhaps I have understood more than was intended), that the point of dependence was given up, and that we are to be treated with as a free people. I am not sure that Mr. Oswald has explicitly said so, but I know that Mr. Grenville has, and that he was to make that declaration previous to the commencement of the treaty. It is now intimated to me from several quarters, that Lord Shelburne's plan is, to retain the sovereignty for the King, giving us otherwise an independent Parliament, and a government similar

to that of late intended for Ireland. If this be really his project, our negotiation for peace will not go very far. The thing is impracticable and impossible, being inconsistent with the faith we have pledged, to say nothing of the general disposition of our people. Upon the whole I should believe, that, though Lord Shelburne might formerly have entertained such an idea, he had probably dropped it before he sent Mr. Oswald here; your words above cited do however throw a little doubt in my mind, and have, with the intimations of others, made me less free in communication with his Lordship, whom I much esteem and honor, than I should otherwise have been. I wish, therefore, you would afford me what you can of *éclaircissement.**

* *From Richard Oswald to the Earl of Shelburne.* — "I plainly see the Doctor inclines, that their business should be done under a separate commission. As to any information I can give in relation to these affairs, which your Lordship recommends to me, I beg leave to say, that, although I had better opportunities of conversation than I have, there is very little to be got here. I will however not scruple to give my opinion as things occur to me, namely, that the more anxious we appear for peace, the more backward the people here will be, or the harder in their terms, which is much the same thing; and that, having fully satisfied this court of our desire to put an end to the war, as has been done, the more vigorously our exertions are pushed in the interim, we shall come sooner to our purpose, and on better terms.

"With respect to the Commissioners of the colonies, our conduct towards them, I think, ought to be of a style somewhat different. They have shown a desire to treat, and to end with us on a separate footing from the other powers; and, I must say, in a more liberal way, or at least with a greater appearance of feeling for the future interests and connexions of Great Britain, than I expected. I speak so from the text of the last conversation I had with Dr. Franklin, as mentioned in my letter of yesterday. And therefore we ought to deal with them tenderly, and as supposed conciliated friends, or at least well disposed to a conciliation, and not as if we had any thing to give them, that we keep from them, or that they are very anxious to have. Even Dr. Franklin himself, as the subject happened to lead that way, as good as told me yesterday, that they were their own masters, and seemed to

This letter, going by a courier, will probably get to hand long before the one preceding in date, which went by Mr. Young, who travels on foot. I therefore enclose the copy of it, which was taken in the press. You may return it to me when the other arrives.

By the return of the courier, you may oblige me, by communicating what is fairly communicable, of the history of Mr. Fox's and Lord J. Cavendish's resignation, with any other changes made or likely to be made. With sincere esteem, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

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make no account of the grant of independence as a favor. I was so much satisfied beforehand of their ideas on that head, that I will own to your Lordship, I did not read to the Doctor that part of your letter, wherein you mentioned that grant as if, in some shape, it challenged a return on their part. When the Doctor pointed at the object of the Enabling Bill, as singly resting on a dispensation of acts of Parliament they cared not for, I thought it enough for me to say, they had been binding and acknowledged; to which no answer was made. When the Doctor mentioned the report as if there was an expectation of retaining the sovereignty, I ventured a little further, though with a guarded caution, to touch him on the only tender side of their supposed present emancipation, and said, that such a report was possibly owing to the imagination of people, upon hearing of the rejoicing in America, on the cessation of war, change of ministry, &c., which they might conclude would have some effect in dividing the provinces, and giving a different turn to affairs; as no doubt there was a great proportion of these people, notwithstanding all that had happened, who, from considerations of original affinity, correspondence, and other circumstances, were still strongly attached to England. To this also there was no answer made.

"At the same time I cannot but say, that I was much pleased upon the whole with what passed on the occasion of this interview. And I really believe the Doctor sincerely wishes for a speedy settlement, and that, after the loss of dependence, we may lose no more; but, on the contrary, that a cordial reconciliation may take place over all that country.

"Amongst other things I was pleased at his showing me a state of the aids they had received from France, as it looked as if he wanted I should see the amount of their obligations to their ally; and as if it was the only foundation of the ties France had over them, excepting

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Mr. Fox's Resignation.

Passy, 12 July, 1782.

SIR,

I enclose a letter for Lord Shelburne, to go by your courier, with some others, of which I request his care. They may be put into the penny post. I have received a note informing me, that "some opposition given by his Lordship to Mr. Fox's decided *plan of*

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gratitude, which the Doctor owned in so many words. But at the same time he said the debt would be punctually and easily discharged; France having given to 1788 to pay it. The Doctor also particularly took notice of the discharge of the interest to the term of the peace, which he said was kind and generous. It is possible I may make a wrong estimate of the situation of the American business, and of the chance of a total or partial recovery being desperate. In that case my opinion will have no weight, and so will do no hurt; yet in my present sentiments I cannot help offering it, as thinking that circumstances are in that situation that I heartily wish we were done with these people, and as quickly as possible, since we have much to fear from them, in case of their taking the pet, and throwing themselves into more close connexions with this court, and our other enemies.

"Since writing the above, I am told by a friend who had some conversation with Dr. Franklin this morning, that he (the Doctor) had received a letter from some person in England, who is no friend to the late changes, giving among other things an account as if the new administration were not so well disposed to end so quickly and agreeably with the colonies, as those who have left it. This, the gentleman told me, led the Doctor to express himself very strongly as to his desire of quick despatch, as he wanted much to go home, and have the chance of a few years' repose, having but a short time to live in the world, and had also much private business to do.

"I should therefore hope it may be possible soon to bring their business near to a final close, and that they will not be any way stiff as to those articles he called *advisable;* or will drop them altogether. Those he called *necessary* will hardly be any obstacle. I shall be able to make a better guess when I have another meeting with him jointly with Mr. Jay, which I hope to have by the time this courier returns."—*Paris, July 11th. MS. Letter.*

unequivocally acknowledging American independence, was one cause of that gentleman's resignation;" this, from what you have told me, appears improbable. It is further said, that "Mr. Grenville thinks Mr. Fox's resignation will be fatal to the present negotiation." This perhaps is as groundless as the former. Mr. Grenville's next courier will probably clear up matters. I did understand from him, that such an acknowledgment was intended previous to the commencement of the treaty; until it is made, and the treaty formally begun, propositions and discussions seem, in consideration, to be untimely; nor can I enter into particulars without Mr. Jay, who is now ill with the influenza. My letter, therefore, to his Lordship is merely complimentary on his late appointment. I wish a continuance of your health, in that at present sickly city, being with sincere esteem, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I send you enclosed the late resolutions of the State of Maryland, by which the general disposition of people in America may be guessed respecting any treaty to be proposed by General Carleton, if intended, which I do not believe.

TO THE EARL OF SHELBURNE.

Passy, 12 July, 1782.

MY LORD,

Mr. Oswald informing me, that he is about to despatch a courier, I embrace the opportunity of congratulating your Lordship on your appointment to the Treasury. It is an extension of your power to do good, and in that view, if in no other, it must increase your

happiness, which I heartily wish. Being with great and sincere respect, my Lord, your Lordship's, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

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* Mr. Oswald wrote on the same day to the Earl of Shelburne as follows.

"The courier has been in waiting some time for Dr. Franklin's letters. They are just come to hand, with one to myself, which I think proper to send to your Lordship, with the Maryland paper that was enclosed in it. I am glad to see by the Doctor's letter, as if he wishes a settlement with them may not be stopped, and think that may be presumed from his sending me this letter, and the explanations therein mentioned.

"On the other hand, I cannot but be concerned at this report, which has been conveyed to him, of a reserve intended in the grant of independence, being the first time I ever heard of it. At least Mr. Grenville did not tell me that his signification on that head was accompanied with any such reservation. And, upon the faith of that, I have in my letters to your Lordship, and in conversation with Dr. Franklin, always supposed, that the grant was meant to be absolute and unconditional, which last, however, is a term I never used, thinking such qualification unnecessary. Its being given out, that a difference subsisted and resignations happened on this account, must naturally occasion this hesitation in the Commissioners of the colonies; and so I see by the Doctor's letter to me, he puts a sort of stoppage upon the preliminaries of settlement with them, which had been pretty well stretched out, and defined in his conversations with me on the 10th instant. And until there is a further explanation under your Lordship's authority, on the said head of independence, I am in a manner forbid, in the Doctor's letter, to go back upon the plan of that conference, and to claim any right to the propositions thereof. Which, if complete independence was meant to be granted, is a little unlucky; and there is reason to regret that anybody should have been so wicked as to throw this stumblingblock in the way, by which not only peace with the colonies is obstructed, but the general treaty is suspended, which I cannot help still thinking hangs upon a settlement with the colonies, and so, by this unlucky interjection, the peace of the country at home is disturbed, and the blame thrown upon the new administration and upon your Lordship by name." — *Paris, July 12th. MS. Letter.*

From the Earl of Shelburne to Richard Oswald. — "The King has given Mr. Grenville leave to return, and directed him to acquaint the French minister and Dr. Franklin, that it is for the purpose of receiving fresh instructions, which will be necessary on the change of the department, taking care to repeat every assurance of the King's desire of peace, and not to leave any impression, on the minds of those with whom he is in treaty, of the least relaxation from the intention and

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Capture of Flemish Ships by American Privateers. — English Ships furnished with Imperial Papers.

Passy, 18 July, 1782.

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me this day, enclosing a memorial, which relates to the interests of some subjects of the Emperor, residing at Ostend, who allege, that a ship of theirs has been taken by an American privateer, and carried into Boston, on pretence that the property was English, &c. I shall immediately transmit the memorial to Congress, as desired. But, there being courts of admiralty established in each of the United States, I conceive, that the regular steps to be taken by the complainants would be an application for justice to those courts by some person on the spot, duly authorized by them as their agent; and, in case the judgment of the court is not satisfactory, that then

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spirit of the negotiation as hitherto carried on. I have the firmest reliance on Mr. Grenville's honor, that he will take care that the King's service shall not suffer in any respect by his departure. And I must strictly enjoin you not to mention to any person whatever this communication, till Mr. Grenville himself communicates his intentions and instructions, and in his own manner." — *Whitehall, July 13th. MS. Letter.*

From Thomas Townshend to Richard Oswald. — "Of those with whom you are to treat I have no knowledge of any except Dr. Franklin. My knowledge of him is of long standing, though of no great degree of intimacy. I am not vain enough to suppose, that any public conduct or principles of mine should have attracted much of his notice. But I believe he knows enough of them to be persuaded, that no one has been more averse to the carrying on this unhappy contest, or a more sincere friend to peace and reconciliation, than myself. If he does me the justice to believe these sentiments to be sincere, he will be convinced, that I shall show myself in the transaction of this business an unequivocal and zealous friend to pacification upon the fairest and most liberal terms." — *Whitehall, July 26th. MS. Letter.*

they appeal to the Congress, which cannot well take cognizance of such matters in the first instance.

The merchants of Ostend may possibly not have as yet correspondents established in all the States; but any merchant of credit in the country would transact such business on receiving their request, with the proper power of attorney; or, if his Imperial Majesty should think fit to appoint a consul-general to reside in those States, such an officer might at all times assist his compatriots with his counsels and protection, in any affairs that they might have in that country. I am the more particular in mentioning this to your Excellency, because I apprehend these cases may hereafter be frequent; and, if the complaints are to be addressed to you and me, we are likely to have a great deal of trouble, as I am informed, that it has become a daily practice for outward bound English ships to put into Ostend, and make a formal pretended sale of ship and cargo to a merchant of the place, who furnishes Imperial papers for the voyage under his own name, and receives a certain sum per cent for the operation.

This is said to be a branch of great profit to the Flemish merchants, and that a very great number of English ships are now at sea with such papers; and I suspect, even from their own manner of stating the transaction, that the ship and cargo reclaimed by the complainants are of that kind. This seems to me an abuse of the neutrality; as these fictitious profits are added to the advantage of real carriage for the belligerent nations, they make it too much the interest of neutral neighbours to foment wars and obstruct peace, that such profits may continue. And, if it is to be understood as a settled point, that such papers are to protect English property, the fitters-out of privateers

from France, Spain, Holland, and America, will in another year be all ruined, for they will find none but Flemish ships upon the ocean. With the greatest respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE.

Passy, 24 July, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

In answer to your questions, Mr. Oswald is doing nothing, having neither powers nor instructions; and, being tired of doing nothing, has despatched a courier requesting leave to return. He has, I believe, received no letters, since I saw you, from Lord Shelburne. Mr Grenville's return hither is, I think, doubtful, as he was particularly connected in friendship with Mr. Fox, but, if he stays, I suppose some other will be sent, for I do not yet see sufficient reason to think they would abandon the negotiation, though, from some appearances, I imagine they are more intent upon dividing us, than upon making a general peace. I have heard nothing further from Mr. Laurens, nor received any paper from him respecting Lord Cornwallis. And since that General's letter, written after the battle of Camden, and ordering not only the confiscation of rebels' estates, but the hanging of prisoners, has been made public, I should not wonder, if the Congress were to disallow our absolution of his parole, and recall him to America. With everlasting esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Mr. Townshend appointed Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

London, 26 July, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You will have heard before you receive this, that Mr. Thomas Townshend is appointed Secretary of State for that department to which the American correspondence belongs. He is, and has been for many years, one of my most intimate friends. A more honorable and honest man does not exist. I have been requested, in connexion with him, to undertake one branch of his office relating to America, as instrumental to some necessary arrangements in the course of a negotiation for peace with America. The point which I have been requested to undertake is the case, or rather the diversity of cases, of the American refugees.

I understand, that, in the progress of this business, I shall be referred to a correspondence with you, as matter may arise. My purpose, therefore, for the present is only to advertise you of this, in case you should have any preliminary matter to give or receive elucidation upon. I am very ready to undertake any matter, which may be necessary or instrumental towards peace, especially in connexion with my worthy friend Mr. Townshend.

You know all my principles upon American pacification, and *sweet reconciliation*. I shall always remain in the same. But the delegation of a single point to me, such as the case of the refugees, does not entitle me to advise upon the great outlines or principles of such pacific negotiations. I shall retain my full reservation in such points as events may justify. My

personal motive for saying this to you is obvious. But, in point of justice to those who have at present the direction of public measures in this country, I must request, that this caution of mine may be accepted only as personal to myself, and not as inferential upon the conduct of others, where I am not a party. Having taken a zealous part in the principles and negotiations of peace, I wish to stand clear from any collateral constructions, which might affect myself, and at the same time not to impose any collateral or inferential constructions upon others.

God prosper the work of peace and *good will* (as the means of peace) among men. I am ever your affectionate friend,

D. HARTLEY.

FROM THE EARL OF GRANTHAM TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sincerity of the Ministry. — Mr. Fitzherbert.

Whitehall, 26 July, 1782.

SIR,

As the first object of my wishes is to contribute to the establishment of an honorable and lasting peace, I address myself to you without ceremony, upon the conviction that you agree with me in this principle. If I was not convinced that it was also the real system of the ministers of this country, I should not now be coöperating with them. The step they had already taken, in sending Mr. Grenville to Paris, is a proof of their intentions; and, as that gentleman does not return to his station there, I trust that the immediate appointment of a person to succeed him, will testify my agreement to the principles upon which he was employed. I therefore beg leave to recommend Mr. Fitz-

herbert* to your acquaintance, who has the King's commands to repair to Paris.

As I have not the advantage of being known to you, I can claim no pretence for my application to you, but my public situation, and my desire to merit your confidence upon a subject of so much importance, as a pacification between the parties engaged in a calamitous war. I have the honor to be, with great regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

GRANTHAM.

FROM THE EARL OF SHELBURNE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Shelburne House, 27 July, 1782.

SIR,

I am much obliged by the honor of your letter of the 12th instant. You do me the most acceptable justice, in supposing my happiness intimately connected with that of mankind, and I can with truth assure you it will give me great satisfaction, in every situation, to merit the continuance of your good opinion. I have the honor to be, with very sincere regard and esteem, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

SHELBURNE.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Doubts as to the Sincerity of the British Ministry in proposing a Negotiation of Peace.

Translation.

Versailles, 28 July, 1782.

SIR,

I have received the letter which you did me the honor to write on the 24th instant, and the two pa-

* Alleyne Fitzherbert, afterwards created Lord St. Helens.

pers sent at the same time. The contradictions, which these contain, are worthy of remark. Not only they destroy each the effect of the other, but they are both in manifest opposition to the ministerial declarations made by Mr. Grenville.

It appears, that Lord Shelburne has more in view to produce a division between the King and the United States, than to promote a just and durable peace; but we must believe that he cannot long avoid being convinced, that his plan is essentially a mistaken one, and that there is no time to be lost in changing it, if peace is the object for which he is solicitous.

As to the King, Sir, good faith, and the fidelity which he owes to his allies, will be the invariable guide of his conduct; for justice and moderation will ever lie at the foundation of the system of pacific measures adopted by his Majesty. If the English ministers are disposed to act in obedience to these principles, they can easily succeed in restoring peace upon reasonable conditions; but, if they continue constantly changing their views and measures, if they desire intrigue rather than serious negotiation, they run the risk of committing themselves gratuitously, and of voluntarily prolonging the calamities of war.

It is to Lord Shelburne, however, who now has the direction of affairs in England, that it properly belongs to make these reflections. We can only hope, that they may not escape his sagacity, and wait until that minister informs us in what manner he intends to pursue the negotiation begun with Mr. Grenville, or to follow up the answer lately given by the English ministry to the courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg. I have the honor to be, with great sincerity, Sir, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Affair of Captain Asgill. — Justification of the Proceedings in Regard to Him.

Passy, 28 July, 1782.

SIR,

I have but this moment had an opportunity, by the departure of my company, of perusing the letters you put into my hands this afternoon; and I return them directly, without waiting till our interview to-morrow morning, because I would not give a moment's delay to the delivery of those directed to other persons.

The situation of Captain Asgill and his family afflicts me, but I do not see what can be done by any one here to relieve them. It cannot be supposed, that General Washington has the least desire of taking the life of that gentleman. His aim is to obtain the punishment of a deliberate murder, committed on a prisoner in cold blood, by Captain Lippencot. If the English refuse to deliver up or punish this murderer, it is saying, that they choose to preserve him rather than Captain Asgill. It seems to me, therefore, that the application should be made to the English ministers for positive orders, directing General Carleton to deliver up Lippencot; which orders, being obtained, should be despatched immediately by a swift-sailing vessel. I do not think any other means can produce the effect desired. The cruel murders of this kind, committed by the English on our people, since the commencement of the war, are innumerable. The Congress and their generals, to satisfy the people, have often threatened retaliation, but have always hitherto forborne to execute it; and they have been often insultingly told by their enemies, that this forbearance did not proceed

from humanity, but fear. General Greene, though he solemnly and publicly promised it in a proclamation, never made any retaliation for the murder of Colonel Haynes, and many others in Carolina; and the people, who now think, if he had fulfilled his promise, this crime would not have been committed, clamor so loudly, that I doubt General Washington cannot well refuse what appears to them so just and necessary for their common security. I am persuaded that nothing I could say to him on the occasion would have the least effect in changing his determination.*

Excuse me, then, if I presume to advise the despatching a courier immediately to London, proposing to the consideration of ministers the sending such orders to General Carleton directly. They would have an excellent effect in other views. The post goes tomorrow morning at ten o'clock; but, as nine days have been spent in bringing the letters here by that conveyance, an express is preferable. With sincere esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. Franklin.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Mr. Oswald's Commission to treat.

Passy, 8 August, 1782.

Sir,

Yesterday Mr. Oswald communicated to Mr. Jay and me a paper he had just received from his court, being a copy of the King's order to the attorney or solicitor general, to prepare a commission to pass the great seal, appointing him to treat with us; and he showed us a letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend,

* For the particulars relating to the case of Captain Asgill, see *Washington's Writings*, Vol. I. p. 378; Vol. VIII. pp. 265, 301, 336, 361.

which expresses his concern, that the commission itself could not be sent by this courier, the officers who were to expedite it being in the country, which would occasion a delay of eight or ten days; but that its being then sent might be depended on, and it was hoped the treaty might, in the mean time, be proceeded on. Mr. Oswald left with me a copy of the paper, which I enclose for your Excellency's consideration, and am, with great respect, Sir, your Excellency's, &c. B. FRANKLIN.*

* *From Richard Oswald to Thomas Townshend.* — "This afternoon I went to Passy, and carried a copy of the commission to Dr. Franklin. After perusal, he said he was glad it was come; that he had been at Versailles yesterday, and Count de Vergennes had asked about it; and, upon the Doctor's telling him it was not come, he said he could do nothing with Mr. Fitzherbert till it arrived; as both treaties must go on together hand in hand.

"I showed him Mr. Townshend's letter accounting for a copy only being sent, as the chancellor and attorney-general were at a distance in the country. The Doctor seemed to be satisfied, and said, as on a former occasion, he hoped we should agree and not be long about it. There were no particulars touched upon; and, after sitting about a quarter of an hour, I proposed calling on Mr. Jay, the only other commissioner at Paris. The Doctor said it was right, and returned me the copy of the commission to be left with Mr. Jay, which he would bring back to the Doctor, as he was to dine at Passy.

"I accordingly returned to Paris, and called on Mr. Jay. He is a man of good sense, of frank, easy, and polite manners; he read over the copy of the commission, and Mr. Townshend's letter accounting for its not being under seal, and then said, by the quotation from the act of Parliament on the commission, he supposed it was meant, that independence was to be treated upon, and was to be granted perhaps as the price of peace; that it ought to be no part of a treaty; it ought to have been expressly granted by act of Parliament, and an order for all troops to be withdrawn previous to any proposal for treaty. As that was not done, the King, he said, ought to do it now by proclamation, and order all garrisons to be evacuated, and then close the American war by a treaty. He said many things of a retrospective kind; such as the happy effects a declaration of that nature at earlier periods would have produced, if Great Britain had nobly and handsomely made this grant before such deep wounds had been given to that bias and attachment, which till then subsisted all over that country in favor of

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 8 August, 1782.

SIR,

I have received the letter of this day, with which you have honored me, and the copy of the power, which Mr. Oswald has communicated to you. The

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Great Britain, even in spite of their petitions being repeatedly rejected. That in such case they would have undoubtedly concerted such plan of treaty, as would have not only restored peace, but would have laid a solid bottom of amity and conciliation, and such as would have obliterated from their memory in a short time all remembrance of preceding acts of distress and violence.

"But, by the continued enforcement of the same cruel measures, the minds of the people in general all over that continent were almost totally alienated from Great Britain, so that they detested the very name of an Englishman. That it was true, a number of the older people had not forgot their former connexions, and their inclinations might still lean towards England. But, when they were gone, and the younger generation come to take their place, who had never felt any of those impressions, those inclinations would be succeeded by grudge and resentment of every kind, upon reflecting upon what they had seen, and their parents had suffered; that few of them but could recollect the loss of blood of some relation or other, devastation of their estates, and other misfortunes; on which occasion he ran into a detail of particulars, as unnecessary as unpleasant here to be repeated; and which I would not have touched upon, if I did not think a free exposure of the features of this conversation may help to form a judgment of what may be expected in the issue, from the determination of this commissioner, and consequently what concessions on this very critical occasion it may be safe and proper to propose or insist upon.

"As information respecting the real sentiments of those gentlemen was the object I principally aimed at in the commencement of this business, I allowed Mr. Jay to go on without interruption, remarking only upon the whole, that, supposing there had been capital mistakes in the direction as well as in the execution of our measures, it would be hard to bring the charge home to the nation in general; and there was a good deal to be said even in excuse of the ministers, who presided over the conduct of those measures, considering that they were not personally acquainted with the circumstances of that country, and therefore could not but naturally listen to the information they received

form in which it appears is not that which is usual on similar occasions, but it has not prevented me from forming my opinion in the first instance. I have bestowed the greatest attention on it, and, if you will be so good as to favor me with a visit on Saturday morning, I shall confer with you and Mr. Jay, if it will be convenient for him to accompany you. I have the honor to be, most sincerely, Sir, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

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from those, who were so acquainted; who came over from America as refugees, and who had upon all occasions insisted, that we had so great a proportion of friends in all the colonies, as to require only a temporary support from government to bring every thing back to the original state of peace and subordination; that it was the search after those friends of government, which, in consequence of personal interference and correspondence in writing, has kept up and encouraged a continuance of the measures of coercion complained of, until they brought on at last the present unfortunate crisis.

"Mr. Jay admitted that some blame was justly to be imputed to the misrepresentation of the refugees, and other correspondents above mentioned, who, he said, at least many of them, were in a particular manner concerned, on account of their private interest, to have things brought back by any means to their original state.

"He returned to the subject of independence, as not being satisfied with its being left as a matter of treaty. I said the method proposed was much the same as what he meant, and perhaps such as the nature of the British constitution made necessary. Independence on Great Britain, in the most complete sense, would be granted without any reserve, always supposing that their States should be equally independent of other nations. And so the treaty might proceed, in the course which was thus marked out for it, until it ended in peace. He said, peace was very desirable, and the sooner the better. But the great point was, to make such a peace as should be lasting. This brought back my attention to the same expression in Count de Vergennes' discourse in April, when I first had the honor to wait on him, and the more so, that, almost in every conversation I have had with Dr. Franklin, he has made use of the same words, and delivered as in the way of aphorism, and as an indispensable principle, in the foundation of a final settlement with them and France.

"I never at these times chose to ask for an explanation, having no right to do so. I thought it was then too early to venture on such delicate ground, and so I remained at a loss, as to the intended meaning of the words, although I strongly suspected the expression pointed

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby. — Compensation to Loyalists. — Fisheries. — Western Lands.

Philadelphia, 9 August, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Having written to Mr. Jay, who I presume is with you, I do not think it necessary to repeat what I have mentioned to him. We have not heard from you since March; a very long period, considering the interesting events that have taken place between that time and this. Many vessels have arrived without bringing us a line from you. I am apprehensive that Mr. Barclay does not communicate to you the frequent opportunities that offer of writing. I shall write to him upon the subject.

Sir Guy Carleton and Admiral Digby have informed the General, that a negotiation for a general peace is now on foot, and that the King, his master, has agreed to yield the independence of America without making it conditional. I shall enclose a copy of his letter at

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at some unpleasant or unfavorable limitation on the conduct of Great Britain. But now, being in a somewhat different situation, and having so fair an opportunity, which I wished not to miss, in order to guess at the meaning of this phrase, I replied, that such long intermission of war was certainly very desirable. But what security could there be given for a continuance of peace, but such as generally put an end to all wars, being that of treaty; but which was often found to be a very inadequate security, as was the case of the last treaty, concluded at this place only twenty years ago.

"To this Mr. Jay replied, he would not give a farthing for any parchment security whatever. They had never signified any thing since the world began, when any prince or state, of either side, found it convenient to break through them. But the peace he meant was such, or so to be settled, that it should not be the *interest* of either party to violate it. This, he said, was the only security that could be proposed, to prevent those frequent returns of war, by which the world was kept in continual disturbance." — *Paris, August 7th. MS. Letter.*

large, which refers to another object, the exchange of prisoners. This great point once yielded, I see nothing that will obstruct your negotiations, except three points of discussion, which I have before written to you about. I wish it had been possible to obtain the estimates I mention, as they might have been rendered useful to you upon one of them. But the negligence of the governors, or legislatures of the several States, have rendered all my endeavours hitherto unsuccessful, notwithstanding repeated promises to give this subject their earliest attention. The restoration of confiscated property has become utterly impossible, and the attempt would throw the country into the utmost confusion.

The fisheries are too important an object for you to lose sight of; and, as to the back lands, I do not conceive that England can seriously expect to derive any benefit from them, that will be equivalent to the jealousy that the possession of them would awaken and keep alive between her and this country. I transmit to you a bill for seventy-one thousand three hundred and eighty livres, being the amount of one quarter's salary to yourself, and Messrs. Jay, Adams, Carmichael, Dana, and Dumas. No provision is made for the private secretaries, or contingencies, not having been furnished with an account of them. I also send bills for the first quarter, commencing in January, so that you will, on the receipt of this, be enabled to pay one half year's salary to our ministers and their secretaries.

I just now learn, that Carleton has published his and Digby's letter to the General. The design of this must either be, to see whether the people of this country will catch so eagerly at the proposition for a peace, which yields them their independence, as to be careless about the alliance, or to impress us with an

idea, that we are more indebted for our freedom to the generosity of Great Britain, than to the attention of France to our interests in the general treaty. It is not to be doubted, that the good sense and the gratitude of this country will defeat both these objects. I have the honor to be, &c.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

P. S. If Mr. Jay should not be at Paris, I must beg you to open and decipher for him the letter of this month, and the resolution contained therein, marked on the back, below the seal, *August*, and send it to him by the earliest opportunity.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Accounts between France and the United States. — Sweden ready to treat. — Medal commemorative of the Victories at Saratoga and Yorktown. — Monument procured in Paris. — Delays in the Negotiation.

Passy, 12 August, 1782.

SIR,

I have lately been honored with your several letters, of March 9th, and May 22d, and 30th.* The paper, containing a state of the commerce in North America, and explaining the necessity and utility of convoys for its protection, I have laid before the minister, accompanied by a letter, pressing that it be taken into immediate consideration; and I hope it may be attended with success.

The order of Congress, for liquidating the accounts

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. pp. 315, 357.

between this court and the United States, was executed before it arrived. All the accounts against us for money lent, and stores, arms, ammunition, clothing, &c., furnished by government, were brought in and examined, and a balance received, which made the debt amount to the even sum of eighteen millions, exclusive of the Holland loan, for which the King is guarantee. I send a copy of the instrument to Mr. Morris. In reading it, you will discover several fresh marks of the King's goodness towards us, amounting to the value of near two millions. These, added to the free gifts before made to us at different times, form an object of at least twelve millions, for which no returns but that of gratitude and friendship are expected. These, I hope, may be everlasting. The constant good understanding between France and the Swiss Cantons, and the steady benevolence of this crown towards them, afford us a well grounded hope that our alliance may be as durable and as happy for both nations; there being strong reasons for our union, and no crossing interests between us. I write fully to Mr. Morris on money affairs, who will doubtless communicate to you my letter, so that I need say the less to you on that subject.

The letter to the King was well received; the accounts of your rejoicings on the news of the Dauphin's birth gave pleasure here; as do the firm conduct of Congress in refusing to treat with General Carleton, and the unanimous resolutions of the Assemblies of different States on the same subject. All ranks of this nation appear to be in good humor with us, and our reputation rises throughout Europe. I understand from the Swedish ambassador, that their treaty with us will go on as soon as ours with Holland is finished; our treaty with France, with such improvements

as that with Holland may suggest, being intended as the basis.

There have been various misunderstandings and mismanagements among the parties concerned in the expedition of the *Bon Homme Richard*, which have occasioned delay in dividing the prize money. M. de Chaumont, who was chosen by the captains of all the vessels in the expedition as their agent, has long been in a state little short of bankruptcy, and some of the delays have possibly been occasioned by the distress of his affairs. He now informs me, that the money is in the hands of the minister of the marine. I shall in a few days present the memorial you propose, with one relating to the prisoners, and will acquaint you with the answer. Mr. Barclay is still in Holland; when he returns he may take into his hands what money can be obtained on that account.

I think your observations respecting the Danish complaints through the minister of France perfectly just. I will receive no more of them by that channel, and will give your reasons to justify my refusal.

Your approbation of my idea of a medal, to perpetuate the memory of York and Saratoga victories, gives me great pleasure, and encourages me to have it struck. I wish you would acquaint me with what kind of a monument at York the emblems required are to be fixed on; whether an obelisk or a column; its dimensions; whether any part of it is to be marble, and the emblems carved on it, and whether the work is to be executed by the excellent artists in that way which Paris affords; and, if so, to what expense they are to be limited. This puts me in mind of a monument I got made here and sent to America, by order of Congress, five years since. I have heard of its arrival, and nothing more. It was admired here

for its elegant antique simplicity of design, and the various beautiful marbles used in its composition. It was intended to be fixed against a wall in the State House of Philadelphia. I know not why it has been so long neglected; it would, methinks, be well to inquire after it, and get it put up somewhere. Directions for fixing it were sent with it. I enclose a print of it. The inscription in the engraving is not on the monument; it was merely the fancy of the engraver. There is a white plate of marble left smooth to receive such inscription as the Congress should think proper.*

Our countrymen, who have been prisoners in England, are sent home, a few excepted, who were sick, and who will be forwarded as soon as recovered. This eases us of a very considerable charge.

I communicated to the Marquis de Lafayette the paragraph of your letter which related to him. He is still here, and, as there seems not so much likelihood of an active campaign in America, he is probably more useful where he is. His departure, however, though delayed, is not absolutely laid aside.

The second changes in the ministry of England have occasioned, or have afforded, pretences for various delays in the negotiation for peace. Mr. Grenville had two successive imperfect commissions. He was at length recalled, and Mr. Fitzherbert is now arrived to replace him, with a commission in due form to treat with France, Spain, and Holland. Mr. Oswald, who is here, is informed by a letter from the new Secre-

* This was probably the monument ordered by Congress to be erected to the memory of General Montgomery. Dr. Franklin was directed to procure it in Paris, at an expense not exceeding three hundred pounds sterling. See *Journals of Congress, January 25th*, 1776. The monument was placed in the portico of St. Paul's Church, in the city of New York.

tary of State, that a commission, empowering him to treat with the Commissioners of Congress, will pass the seals, and be sent him in a few days; till he arrives, this court will not proceed in its own negotiation.* I send the *Enabling Act*, as it is called. Mr. Jay will acquaint you with what passes between him and the Spanish ambassador, respecting the proposed treaty with Spain. I will only mention, that my conjecture of that court's design to coop us up within the Allegany Mountains is now manifested. I hope Congress will insist on the Mississippi as the boundary, and the free navigation of the river, from which they could entirely exclude us.

An account of a terrible massacre of the Moravian

* *From Richard Oswald to Thomas Townshend.* — "Finding no alteration in the Doctor's manner from the usual good natured and friendly way, in which he had formerly behaved to me, (as I had reason to apprehend, from what had lately passed with his colleague,) and having a quiet and convenient opportunity, I was anxious to learn whether the Doctor entertained those ideas, which in the preceding papers I suspected Mr. Jay had in view, regarding the *means* of preventing future wars, by settling the peace in such a manner as it should not be the interest of the parties to break it.

"With that intent, I told the Doctor I had had a long conversation with Mr. Jay, of which no doubt he had been informed; and in which he had not spared us in his reflections on what had passed in the American war; and that I could not but be sorry he had just reason for the severity of some of them; at the same time I was pleased to find he was equally well disposed to peace, and to bring it quickly to a conclusion, as we were, and also that it should be a lasting one, as he (the Doctor) had always proposed; and that I was only at a loss, as to how that could be ascertained, otherwise than by treaty, which Mr. Jay declared he paid no regard to; and said it could be only depended upon as lasting by its being settled, so as it should not be the *interest* of any of the parties to break it. I told the Doctor, this was certainly the best security, if one could tell how to accommodate the terms so justly to the mutual interests of the parties, as to obviate every temptation to encroachment or trespass.

"The Doctor replied, that the method was very plain and easy; which was to settle the terms in the first projection, on an equal, just, and reasonable footing; and so as neither party should have cause to

Indians has been put into my hands. I send you the papers, that you may see how the fact is represented in Europe. I hope measures will be taken to secure what is left of those unfortunate people.

Mr. Laurens is at Nantes, waiting for a passage with his family to America. His state of health is unfortunately very bad. Perhaps the sea air may recover him, and restore him well to his country. I heartily wish it. He has suffered much by his confinement. Be pleased, Sir, to present my duty to the Congress, and assure them of my most faithful services. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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complain, being the plan which Count de Vergennes had in view, and had always recommended in his conversations with him on the subject of peace. And the Doctor said it was a good plan, and the only one that could make the peace lasting. And which also put him in mind of a story in the Roman History, in the early time of the Republic; when, being at war with the state of Tarentum, and the Tarentines having the worst of it, they sent to the Senate to ask for peace. The ambassador being called in, the Senate told him they agreed to give them peace, and then asked how long he thought it would last; to which he answered, 'That would be according to the conditions; if they were reasonable, the peace would be lasting; if not, it would be short.' The Senate seemed to resent this freedom of expression; but a member got up and applauded it, as fair and manly, and as justly challenging a due regard to moderation on their part.

"It is not easy to say how happy I felt myself at the conclusion of this quotation. The terms and conditions, it is true, remained undecided; and they no doubt comprehend a very serious question, although not material to what I aimed at. Nor did I conceive them to lie so much in my way, as in that of another department, by the concern which the French minister took in settling the principle. Nor did I trouble myself about the possible inefficacy of it, as still depending in some degree on the obligations of treaty, however cautiously adjusted. And therefore I did not think it proper to touch upon that point, nor to say any thing on the subject of terms and conditions.

"The second thing the Doctor touched upon was *independence*. He said, 'by the quotations of Acts of Parliament, he saw it was included in the commission; but that Mr. Grenville had orders to *grant it in the first instance*.' I replied, it was true; and that, though supposed

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Difficulty of obtaining more Supplies. — Beaumarchais's Accounts. — Funds of the United States in Europe.

Passy, 12 August, 1782.

Sir,

I have received (many of them at the same time) your sundry letters of March the 23d, April 8th and 17th, May 17th, 18th, two of the 23d and 29th. It would be a satisfaction to me, if you would likewise mention from time to time the dates of those you receive from me.

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to be granted under this commission, and in the course of the treaty, I hoped it would make no difference with gentlemen, who were so well disposed to put an end to this unhappy business, as I knew him to be. He then asked, if I had instructions. I said I had, and that they were under his Majesty's hand and seal; and that by them it appeared independence, unconditional in every sense, would be granted, and that I saw no reason why it should not make the first article of the settlement or treaty. That I was sorry Mr. Jay should have hesitated so much on that head, as if it ought to have been done separately, and by act of Parliament; and now, Parliament being up, that the grant should be made by proclamation. That I did not pretend to judge whether the right and authority of a grant of that kind, so conveyed, would be proper and effectual. There seemed, however, to be one inconvenience in it, that a proclamation became an address to the Congress, and to every part of their provinces jointly and separately; and might, so far, interfere with the progress of the present commission, under which we hoped, that all pretensions would be properly and expeditiously settled. That in this matter he was a better judge than I could pretend to be. I was only sure of one thing, that the affair might be as effectually done, as in the way proposed by Mr. Jay.

"The Doctor replied, that Mr. Jay was a lawyer, and might think of things that did not occur to those who were not lawyers. And he at last spoke, as if he did not see much or any difference; but still used such a mode of expression, as I could not positively say would preclude him from insisting on Mr. Jay's proposition, or some previous or separate acknowledgment. I was glad to get clear of the subject, without pushing for further explanation, or discussion.

"The Doctor at last touched upon Canada, as he generally does upon the like occasions, and said there could be no dependence on peace

Most of your letters press my obtaining more money for the present year. The late losses suffered in the West Indies, and the unforeseen necessary expenses the reparation there and here must occasion, render it more difficult, and I am told, impossible; though the good disposition of the court towards us continues perfect. All I can say on the head of money, more than I have said in preceding letters, is, that I confide you will be careful not to bankrupt your banker by your drafts; and I will do my utmost, that those you draw shall be duly honored.

The plan you intimate for discharging the bills in

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and good neighbourhood, while that country continued under a different government, as it touched their States in so great a stretch of frontier. I told him I was sensible of that inconvenience; but, having no orders, the consideration of that matter might possibly be taken up at some future time. At my coming away, the Doctor said, that, although the proper commission was not come over, yet, he said, Mr. Jay would call on me with a copy of their credentials. This being Sunday, he said the copy would be made out on Monday. On Tuesday, he must go to Versailles, being the Levee day; but on Wednesday they would call with their papers." — *Paris, August 13th. MS.*

In another despatch, written two days later, Mr. Oswald gave a further account of his conversations as follows.

"At proper times I said what occurred to me as necessary to bring this question to some sort of desirable period; and in particular wished to have Mr. Jay's idea of such way of declaring this unconnected ascertainment of independence, as would satisfy them.

"His former proposal of doing it by proclamation, he gave up, as liable to sundry objections, needless to be here repeated. He then proposed it should be done by a particular and separate deed, or patent, under the great seal, in which my commission for a treaty might also be narrated; and that such patent should be put into the possession of the Commissioners, to be by them sent over to Congress; and accordingly Mr. Jay brought me a draft of the patent. As I could see no other way of satisfying those gentlemen, and it appearing highly necessary that some beginning should be made with them, since, until that was done, the foreign treaty could not proceed in its course, I agreed to send the draft over to his Majesty's Secretary of State by a courier express for that purpose, with my own opinion rather in favor of the proposal than otherwise. And so it was settled with the Com-

favor of Beaumarchais, though well imagined, was impracticable. I had accepted them, and he had discounted them, or paid them away, or divided them amongst his creditors. They were, therefore, in different hands, with whom I could not manage the transactions proposed. Besides, I had paid them punctually when they became due, which was before the receipt of your letter on that subject. That he was furnished with his funds by the government here, is a supposition of which no foundation appears; he says, it was by a company he had formed; and, when he solicited me to give up a cargo in part of payment, he urged,

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missioners. However, afterwards, in casting my eye over the preamble of the draft where it is stated, *as if Sir Guy Carleton had orders to propose a treaty of peace to the Congress*, and believing this to be a mistaken quotation of memory from the copy of Sir Guy's instructions in the possession of the Commissioners, and, as such, inferring an unjust imputation on the consistency of the conduct of Administration, and apprehending also that the Commissioners' entertaining a doubt of this nature might have been the reason, why they wished to be guarded with all this caution in requiring this special acknowledgment under the great seal, besides keeping their minds in suspense in all future proceedings, where confidence in good faith ought to smooth the path on many occasions to a happy termination; I say, in reflecting on these things, I thought it my duty, and I confess I was, on my own particular account, a little anxious to have an explanation of this matter.

"And, therefore, after it had been agreed, in the presence of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay, that I should send off the draft, I took the liberty to point out to them the said preamble, telling them, that there might be a possibility of mistake in the quotation in the last part of the paragraph. Mr. Jay said he had not the copy of Sir Guy's instructions, and acknowledged he had inserted those words from a general impression, that remained on his memory, and could not positively say but there might be some mistake. Dr. Franklin said he had the copy of the instructions, and would send a duplicate to Mr. Jay in a few hours. He did so, and I waited on Mr. Jay to see the papers. Upon the perusal, he owned he had been mistaken, and that Sir Guy's instructions went no further than an order of communication, to inform the Congress and General Washington, that his Majesty intended (or had given directions) to grant free and unconditional independence to the Thirteen States. Finding this prejudice entirely removed, and that

with tears in his eyes, the distress himself and associates were reduced to, by our delay of remittances. I am glad to see that it is intended to appoint a commissioner to settle all our public accounts in Europe. I hope he will have better success with M. Beaumarchais than I have had. He has often promised solemnly to render an account in two or three days. Years have since elapsed, and he has not yet done it. Indeed, I doubt whether his books have been so well kept as to make it possible.

You direct me, in yours of May 17th, to pay over into the hands of Mr. Grand, on your account, such

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Mr. Jay was perfectly satisfied that the whole course of proceeding in this matter was fair and consistent, I asked him, what occasion there was then for this extraordinary caution of insisting on the solemnity of such separate deed under the great seal, since a preliminary clause or article in the treaty, as always intended, might do the whole business, by making it absolute, and not depending, in the view of ascertainment, on the event of other or subsequent articles, and which might be so expressed as to remove every doubt, as to the independence being as free and unconditional as they desired it to be. In confirmation of the greater expediency and despatch of this method, and that it was the sincere intention of his Majesty to make this grant in the precise way they desired, I thought myself warranted in telling him, that I had a full power in my instructions to give them entire satisfaction on this head, and made no scruple in showing it to him, as it stood in the fourth article thereof.

"Upon the perusal, Mr. Jay said that was enough, and he was fully satisfied; and there was no occasion for any other writing on the subject; that resting upon this would save time, and he was happy, also, that this discovery of his mistake prevented their asking of his Majesty any further proof of his good intentions towards them, than what were actually meant and conveyed in those my instructions. Upon this I promised immediately to send off this representation, and also to desire leave and permission to make an absolute acknowledgment of the independence of the States, to stand invariably as the first part of the proposed treaty with those gentlemen. Meantime I think it proper to send enclosed the intended draft, (though now of no use here,) to show by the words scored in the preamble, the grounds of those gentlemen's hesitation, and what gave occasion for a separate deed under the great seal." — *Paris, August 15th. MS. Letter.*

moneys belonging to the United States as may be in Europe, distinct from those to be advanced for the current year. I would do it with pleasure, if there were any such. There may be, indeed, some in Holland, raised by the new loan, but that is not in my disposition, though I have no doubt that Mr. Adams will, on occasion, apply it in support of your credit. As to all the aids given by the crown, all the sums borrowed of it, and all the Dutch loans of ten millions, though the orders to receive have been given to me, the payments from the *Trésor Royal* have all been made on my orders in favor of Mr. Grand, and the money again paid away by him on my drafts for public services and expenses, as you will see by his accounts; so that I never saw or touched a livre of it, except what I received from him in discharge of my salary, and some disbursements. He has even received the whole six millions of the current year, so that I have nothing in any shape to pay over to him. On occasion of my lately desiring to know the state of our funds, that I might judge whether I could undertake to pay what you were directed to pay to Mr. William Lee, by vote of Congress, as soon as the state of public finances would admit, Mr. Grand wrote me a note, with a short sketch of their then supposed situation, which I enclose. You will probably have from him, as soon as possible, a more perfect account; but this will serve to show, that I could not prudently comply with your wish, of making that payment to Mr. Lee, and I have accordingly declined it; the less unwillingly, as he is entitled by the vote to interest.

I send herewith the accounts of the supplies you have received in goods, which I promised in my last.

The sum of their value is included in the settlement made with this court, mentioned in a former letter.

Herewith I also send a copy of the contract, which has been long in hand, and but lately completed. The term of the first yearly payment we are to make was readily changed at my request, from the first to the third year after the peace; the other marks of the King's bounty towards us will be seen in the instrument. The interest already due and forgiven, amounts to more than a million and a half. What might become due before the peace is uncertain. The charges of exchange, commissions, brokerage, &c., of the Dutch loan amount to more than five hundred thousand livres, which is also given, so that we have the whole sum net, and are to pay for it but four per cent. This liquidation of our accounts with the court was completed before the vote of Congress directing it came to hand. Mr. Grand examined all the particulars, and I have no doubt of its being approved.

Mr. Grand, to whom I have communicated your letter of April 17th, will soon write to you fully. We shall observe the general rule you give respecting the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth bills. The attention, care, and pains necessary to prevent (by exact accounts of those accepted, and an examination of those offered,) impositions, which are often attempted by presenting at a distant time, the second, third, &c., are much greater than I could have imagined. Much has been saved by that attention, of which, of late, we keep an account; but the hazard of loss by such attempts might be diminished, together with the trouble of examination, by making fewer small bills.

Your conduct, activity, and address as a financier and provider for the exigencies of the state, are much admired and praised here, their good consequences being so evident, particularly with regard to the rising credit of our country and the value of bills. No one

but yourself can enjoy your growing reputation more than I do.

Mr. Grand has undertaken to pay any balance, that may be found due to Messrs. le Couteulx out of the money in his hands. Applying for so small a sum as five thousand livres would be giving trouble for a trifle, as all applications for money must be considered in council.

Mr. Grand having already received the whole six millions, either in money or accepted bills, payable at different periods, I expect he will deliver up to me the bills for that sum, which you have drawn upon me, the rather as they express value received by you. I never heard of any mention here of intended monthly payments, or that the money could not be obtained but by your drafts. I enclose a letter, by which the payment was ordered of the last three millions.

I observe what you mention of the order, that the ministers' salaries are to be hereafter paid in America. I hereby empower and desire you to receive and remit mine. I do not doubt your doing it regularly and timely; for a minister without money, I perceive, makes a ridiculous figure here, though secure from arrests. I have taken a quarter's advance of salary from the 4th of last month, supposing it not intended to *muzzle* immediately *the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn*. With great esteem, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Your boys are well, and Mr. Ridley and Mr. Barclay still in Holland.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 16 August, 1782.

My dear Friend,

Yours I received by Major Young, together with the work of your *véritable philosophe*, which is full of humanity. I was not, before that, at a loss where I should have looked for my *véritable philosophe*, in the present actual scene of public politics. Your honest, anxious, and unremitted endeavours towards the re-establishment of peace, must endear you to your own country, and to all mankind. Whatever may have been transacted in America, (if it can be possible, that the suspicions which you mention should become true, viz. to tamper with America for a breach of faith, of which some suspicions seem to be thrown out by the Provinces of Maryland and Philadelphia,) I can give the strongest testimonies of the constant honor and good faith of your conduct and correspondencies; and my letters to you will bear me equal testimony, that I have never thrown out any dishonorable suggestions to you. When the proposed Congress of your *véritable philosophe* shall meet, neither of us need fear its censures, upon the strictest examination of our correspondence. We will claim the poet's character of the sincere statesman,

"Who knew no thought, but what the world might hear."

In times of suspicion, it must be some satisfaction to both of us to know, that no line or word has ever passed between us, but what the governments of Great Britain, France, and America, might freely peruse as the words of good faith, peace, and *sweet reconciliation*.

The resolutions of Maryland and Philadelphia, to-

gether with the slow proceedings of our *plenipotentiaries*, and even the doubt suggested, whether they may not be waiting for events in America, give me much concern. Not being informed to a certainty of the state of the negotiation, I have declined any concern with the ministry upon the subject of the refugees, &c. My assistance cannot be indispensable upon that topic, but I deem it indispensable to myself not to be committed in unknown ground, which, from the points above mentioned, must appear dubious to me. These are the reasons which I gave to the minister for declining. I must, at the same time, give him the justice of the most absolute and unlimited professions of sincerity for peace. Whatever divisions there may have been, as you say, suspected in the cabinet, there are some of his colleagues still remaining, in whom I have the greatest confidence for sincerity and good intentions. The public prints of this country have stated what are called *shades* of difference as to the mode. Those opinions, which are imputed to Mr. Fox, are certainly most suitable to my opinions. I am free to confess to you, that my wishes would have been, to have taken the most decisive ground relating to independence, &c., immediately from the 27th of March last, viz. the accession of the change of ministry. But I agree with you in sentiment, viz. to concur with all the good that offers, when we cannot obtain all the good that we might wish. The situation of my sentiments at present is, an unbiassed neutrality of expectation, as events may justify.

I shall be obliged to you for the earliest communications of any public events in America, that may come to Europe, with any public resolutions of Congress or the provinces, &c., and all memorials or negotiations, which may pass between the parties in

America. I am very anxious to have the earliest information to form my opinions upon, and to be prepared accordingly. My utmost endeavours will always be exerted to the blessed work of peace. I am ever your affectionate D. HARTLEY.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 17 August, 1782.

MY DEAR GOOD CHILD,

I received your kind letter by Dr. Shuttleworth. It always gives me great pleasure to hear of the welfare of you and yours. As to myself, I continue as hearty as at my age could be expected, and as cheerful as ever you knew me, hoping ere long to see peace and my friends, whose continued regard for me, after so long and so thorough an acquaintance with me, I esteem among my honors and felicities.

It is now a quarter of a century since our friendship commenced; and, though we lived much of the time together, it has never been interrupted by the smallest misunderstanding or coolness. In this observation I include your good mother, from whom I had lately the pleasure of receiving a few lines. I embrace you both with the most tender affection, being ever sincerely yours, B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 23 August, 1782.

SIR,

I have received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the 9th instant, as well as the

memorial enclosed in it. I communicated the paper to the Marquis de Castries, and I make no doubt, but that the minister will take into consideration its contents, as far as circumstances will permit. We are desirous to adopt every measure, that may tend to the prosperity of the commerce established between France and the United States, and we shall neglect nothing to accomplish this object to the universal satisfaction of the two countries. Congress will greatly facilitate our labor, if they will communicate their ideas and wishes on this subject; and I make the request with greater confidence, as I am convinced that that assembly desires as much as we do to establish, on an advantageous and solid basis, the commercial concerns between France and America. I have the honor to be, &c. DE VERGENNES.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Allowance to William Temple Franklin as Secretary. — Salaries of Foreign Ministers.

Passy, 3 September, 1782.

SIR,

I have just received yours, dated the 23d of June.* The accounts of the general sentiments of our people, respecting propositions from England, and the rejoicings on the birth of the Dauphin, give pleasure here; and it affords me much satisfaction to find the conduct of Congress approved by all who hear or speak of it, and to see all the marks of a constantly growing regard for us, and confidence in us, among those in whom such sentiments are most to be desired.

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* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 366.

I hope the affair of Captain Asgill was settled as it ought to be, by the punishment of Lippencot. Applications have been made here to obtain letters in favor of the young gentleman. Enclosed I send you a copy of the answer I gave to that made to me.

I had before acquainted M. Tousard, that his pension would be paid in America, and there only, it being unreasonable to expect that Congress should open a pay office in every part of the world, where pensioners should choose to reside. I shall communicate to him that part of your letter.

You wish to know what allowance I make to my private secretary. My grandson, William T. Franklin, came over with me, and served me as a private secretary during the time of the Commissioners; and no secretary to the commission arriving, though we had been made to expect one, he did business for us all, and this without any allowance for his services, though both Mr. Lee and Mr. Deane at times mentioned it to me as a thing proper to be done, and in justice due to him. When I became appointed sole minister here, and the whole business, which the Commissioners had before divided with me, came into my hands, I was obliged to exact more service from him, and he was indeed, by being so long in the business, become capable of doing more. At length, in the beginning of the year 1781, when he became of age, considering his constant close attention to the duties required, and his having thereby missed the opportunity of studying the law, for which he had been intended, I determined to make him some compensation for the time past, and fix some compensation for the time to come, till the pleasure of Congress respecting him should be known. I accordingly settled an account with him, allowing him from the beginning of December, 1776,

to the end of 1777, the sum of three thousand four hundred livres; and for the year 1778, the sum of four thousand livres; for 1779, four thousand eight hundred livres; and for 1780, six thousand livres. Since that time I have allowed him at the rate of three hundred louis per annum, being what I saw had been allowed by Congress to the secretary of Mr. William Lee, who could not have had, I imagine, a fourth part of the business to go through; since my secretary, besides the writing and copying the papers relative to my common ministerial transactions, has had all those occasioned by my acting in the various employments of judge of admiralty, consul, purchaser of goods for the public, &c. &c., besides that of accepting the Congress bills, a business that requires being always at home, bills coming by post, from different ports and countries, and often requiring immediate answers, whether good or not; and to that end, it being necessary to examine by the books, exactly kept of all preceding acceptances, in order to detect double presentations, which happen very frequently. The great number of these bills makes almost sufficient business for one person, and the confinement they occasion is such, that we cannot allow ourselves a day's excursion into the country, and the want of exercise has hurt our healths in several instances.

The Congress pay much larger salaries to some secretaries, who, I believe, deserve them; but not more than my grandson does the comparatively small one I have allowed to him, his fidelity, exactitude, and address in transacting business, being really what one could wish in such an officer; and the genteel appearance a young gentleman in his station is obliged to make, requiring at least such an income. I do not mention the extraordinary business that has been im-

posed upon us in this embassy, as a foundation for demanding higher salaries than others. I never solicited for a public office, either for myself, or any relation, yet I never refused one, that I was capable of executing, when public service was in question; and I never bargained for salary, but contented myself with whatever my constituents were pleased to allow me. The Congress will therefore consider every article charged in my account, distinct from the salary originally voted, not as what I presume to insist upon, but as what I propose only for their consideration, and they will allow what they think proper.

You desire an accurate estimate of those contingent expenses. I enclose copies of two letters,* which passed between Mr. Adams and me on the subject, and show the articles of which they consist. Their amount in different years may be found in my accounts, except the article of house rent, which has never yet been settled; M. de Chaumont, our landlord, having originally proposed to leave it till the end of the war, and then to accept for it a piece of American land from the Congress, such as they might judge equivalent. If the Congress did intend all contingent charges whatever to be included in the salary, and do not think proper to pay on the whole so much, in that case I would humbly suggest, that the saving may be most conveniently made by a diminution of the salary, leaving the contingencies to be charged; because they may necessarily be very different in different years, and at different courts.

I have been more diffuse on this subject, as your letter gave occasion for it, and it is probably the last time I shall mention it. Be pleased to present my

* See above, p. 44, and *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 238.

dutiful respects to Congress, assure them of my best services, and believe me to be, with sincere esteem, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. As you will probably lay this letter before Congress, I take the liberty of joining to it an extract of my letter to the President, of the 12th of March, 1781, and of repeating my request therein contained, relative to my grandson. I enclose, likewise, extracts of letters from Messrs. Jay and Laurens, which both show the regard those gentlemen have for him, and their desire of his being noticed by the Congress.*

TO JOHN JAY.

Passy, 4 September, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Oswald's courier being returned, with directions to him to make the independence of America the first article in the treaty, I would wait on you if I could, to discourse on the subject; but, as I cannot, I wish to see you here this evening, if not inconvenient to you. With great esteem, I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM RICHARD OSWALD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 5 September, 1782.

SIR,

In consequence of the notice I have just now had from Mr. Jay, of your desire of an extract from my

* See above, pp. 5, 43.

last letter from the Secretary of State, regarding the proposed treaty on the subject of American affairs, and my authority in relation thereto, I take the liberty to send the same enclosed, which, together with the powers contained in the commission, which I had the honor of laying before you and Mr. Jay, I am hopeful will satisfy you of the willingness and sincere desire of his Majesty to give you entire content on that important subject.*

* *From Thomas Townshend to Richard Oswald.* — "I have received and laid before the King your several letters, together with the three packets of papers, containing conversations with Dr. Franklin and Mr. Jay, and your observations thereupon; and I am commanded to signify to you his Majesty's approbation of your conduct in communicating to the American Commissioners the fourth article of your instructions, which could not but convince them that the negotiations for peace, and cession of independence to the Thirteen United Colonies, were intended to be carried on and concluded with the Commissioners in Europe. Those gentlemen having expressed their satisfaction concerning that article, it is hoped they will not entertain a doubt of his Majesty's determination to exercise in the fullest extent the powers with which the Act of Parliament hath invested him, by granting to America full, complete, and unconditional independence, in the most explicit manner, as an article of treaty."

The above is the extract alluded to by Mr. Oswald in the text. The following particulars, contained in the same letter, and constituting a part of Mr. Oswald's instructions, were not communicated to the American Commissioners.

"But you are at the same time to represent to them, if necessary, that the King is not enabled by that Act to cede independence unconnected with a truce, or treaty of peace; and that, therefore, the cession of independence cannot stand as a single, separate article, to be ratified by itself, but may be (and his Majesty is willing it shall be) the first article of the treaty, unconditionally of any compensation or equivalent to be thereafter required in the said treaty. You will observe, that the very article of your instructions referred to is conformable to this idea, as it is expressly mentioned to be offered by his Majesty as the price of peace; and that independence, declared and ratified absolutely and irrevocably, and not depending upon the event of concluding an entire treaty, for the purpose of independence alone, and not for a *peace* or *truce;* to which all the powers of the Act refer.

"If the American Commissioners are, as his Majesty is, sincerely disposed to a speedy termination of the calamities of war, it is not to

This extract I would have sent before now, if I had thought you wished to have it before I had the honor of waiting on you myself; which was only delayed

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be conceived that they will be inclined to delay, and to embarrass the negotiation, by refusing to accept the independence as an article of the treaty, which, by that means, may be to them secured finally and completely, so as to leave no possible ground of jealousy or suspicion. But, in order to give the most unequivocal proof of the King's earnest wish to remove every impediment, I am commanded to signify to you his Majesty's disposition to agree to the plan of pacification proposed by Dr. Franklin himself, including, as it does, the great point in question as part of the first article.

"The articles as specified by Dr. Franklin to you, and recited in your letter to the Earl of Shelburne, of the 10th July last, are as follows.

"1st. Of the first class *necessary* to be granted, independence full and complete in every sense, to the Thirteen States, and all the troops to be withdrawn from thence.

"2d. A settlement of the boundaries of *their* colonies and the loyal colonies.

"3d. A confinement of the boundaries of Canada, at least to what they were before the last Act of Parliament, you think in 1774, if not, to a still more contracted state, on an ancient footing.

"4th. A freedom of fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland, and elsewhere, as well for fish as whales.

"These articles were stated by you as all that Dr. Franklin thought *necessary;* and his Majesty, trusting that they were suggested with perfect sincerity and good faith, has authorized you to go to the *full extent* of them." — *Whitehall, September 1st. MS. Letter.*

It is worthy of particular observation here, that the original instructions to Mr. Oswald authorized him to accede to the articles, which had been proposed by Dr. Franklin as ESSENTIAL, one of which was the right of the United States to the fisheries. Although the ministry afterwards made a strong effort to modify these terms, and especially the article in regard to the fisheries, yet there is no evidence, that they intended at any time to insist on this modification as a *sine qua non;* nor is it ever intimated by Mr. Oswald, in his letters to the ministry, that in any event this claim would be relinquished. On the contrary he repeatedly states, that Dr. Franklin, as well as the other Commissioners, was determined on that point.

In writing to Mr. Townshend, on the 11th of September, Mr. Oswald says;

"As to fishing on the Great Bank, or any other Bank, I own I did not think it material to ask any questions, as I supposed the privilege would not be denied them; or, if denied, I doubted whether their exclusion could be maintained but by continuing in a state of perpetual

until I should be informed by Mr. Jay, that you were well enough to see me upon business.

I heartily wish you a recovery of your health, and

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quarrel with the people of the New England governments. An explanation was still the less necessary, as a question on the same subject would come under our consideration in our treaty with France. In the determination of this last point, perhaps it may be no loss to Great Britain, that the Americans are (with respect to the fishing part) admitted to an equal privilege with the French." *MS. Letter.*

From Richard Oswald to Thomas Townshend. — "Two days ago Dr. Franklin sent to me, desiring a copy of the instructions, which I had promised. I copied out the first part of your letter of the 1st instant, leaving out some immaterial words, and sent it enclosed in a letter from myself, of both of which papers there is a duplicate under this cover. Since then, I have seen Mr. Jay frequently, and have used every argument in my power to get him over his objections to treating without a separate and absolute acknowledgment of independence. And for that purpose I found it necessary, although unwillingly, yet of my own private opinion, to tell him, that there might be a doubt whether the powers in the Act of Parliament went so far as to allow of making that grant, otherwise than as in the course of a treaty for peace, which, as you are pleased to observe, was the sole object of the Act.

"I said, moreover, that, if they still persisted in this demand, there could be nothing done until the meeting of Parliament, and perhaps for some considerable time thereafter; that certain articles had been already agreed upon, and, if we went on and settled the treaty on that footing, with independence standing as the first article of it, we might give opportunity to the foreign treaties to be going on at the same time; so as, for a conclusion of a general peace, there might be nothing wanting, at the meeting of Parliament, but a confirmation of the first article, in case it should be then thought necessary; which I imagined would not be the case.

"To avoid being tedious, I forbear repeating a great many more things to the same purpose, which passed in those conversations with Mr. Jay. Dr. Franklin being so much out of order, I could not think of disturbing him by frequent visits to Passy, and therefore continued taking proper opportunities of talking to Mr. Jay; and the more readily, that, by any judgment I could form of his real intentions, I could not possibly doubt of their pointing directly at a speedy conclusion of the war, and also leaning as favorably to the side of England, as might be consistent with the duties of the trust he has undertaken.

"To convince me, that nothing less than this stood in the way of agreeing to my request of accommodating this difficulty in some shape or other, he told me at last, if Dr. Franklin would consent, he was willing, in place of an express and previous acknowledgment of inde-

am, with sincere esteem and regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

RICHARD OSWALD.

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pendence, to accept of a constructive denomination of character, to be introduced in the preamble of the treaty, by only describing their constituents as the Thirteen United States of America. Upon my appearing to listen to this, and to consent to the substitution, he said, 'But you have no authority in your commission to treat with us under that denomination; for the sundry descriptions of the parties to be treated with, as they stand in that commission, will not bear such application to the character we are directed to claim and abide by, as to support and authenticate any act of your subscription now proposed. There is such a variety of denominations in that commission, that it may be applied to the people you see walking in the streets, as well as to us.'

"When, in reply, I imputed that variety to the official style of such papers, Mr. Jay said it might be so, but they must not rest a question of that importance upon any such explanation; and since they were willing to accept of this, in place of an express declaration of independence, the least they could expect was, that it should appear to be warranted by an explicit authority in that commission. I then asked, if, instead of 'States,' it would not do to say 'Provinces'; or 'States or Provinces.' Mr. Jay said neither of these would answer. I then begged the favor of him to give me in writing some sketch of the alteration he would have to be made in the commission. He readily did so, in a minute which is enclosed; to be more largely explained if necessary, when the commission comes to be made out. He also said, that this new commission must be under the great seal, as the other was.

"Doubting, as to the propriety of giving such things in writing, I thought it was best to go out to Dr. Franklin's, carrying the instructions along with me, to see whether a reading of that article could not satisfy him. But, after reading it, as he still expressed a desire of having a copy, I told him, that although I had no order to that purpose, yet, at any hazard whatsoever, since he desired it, I would not scruple to trust it in his hands. And I then sat down and wrote out a copy, and signed it, which, after comparing it with the original, he laid by, saying very kindly, that the only use he proposed to make of it was, that, in case they took any liberties for the sake of removing difficulties, not expressly specified in their instructions, he might have this paper in his hands to show in justification of their confidence, or some words to that purpose; for I cannot exactly quote them. The Doctor then desired I would tell Mr. Jay he wished to see him in the evening. He did go out again that night, and again this morning; no doubt with a view of agreeing upon an expedient for removing those obstacles to their proceeding, as hinted at in the Doctor's letter to me.

"At noon, and since writing the above, Mr. Jay called and told me,

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Passy, 8 September, 1782.

Sir,

I have received the honor of yours, dated the 5th instant, enclosing an extract of a letter to your Excellency, from the Right Honorable Thomas Townshend,

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that, upon further consultation and consideration of the matter, it was thought advisable not to press upon his Majesty's ministers those arguments, which he proposed to make in the letter he intended to write to me (and which it was understood I might send home), as considering it somewhat more than indelicate for them to pretend to see more clearly, than the King's ministers might do, the expediency if not the necessity, at this critical time, of deciding with precision and despatch upon every measure, that can be reasonably taken for extricating Great Britain out of her present embarrassing situation, in which her affairs must continue to be involved while there remains any hesitation in coming to an agreement with the States of America.

"There only remained for me to ask a single and final question of Mr. Jay, whether, in his last conference with the Doctor (for he was just then come in from him), it was settled between them, that, upon my receiving from his Majesty a new commission, under the great seal, such as the last, with an alteration only as before mentioned, of my being empowered to treat with them as Commissioners of the Thirteen United States of America, naming the said States by their several provincial distinctions, as usual; I said, whether in that case, they would be satisfied to go on with the treaty, and without any other declaration of independence, than as standing as an article in that treaty. Mr. Jay's answer was, that 'with this they would be satisfied, and that immediately upon such commission coming over they would proceed in the treaty. And more than that,' he said, 'they would not be long about it; and perhaps would not be over hard upon us in the conditions.'" —*Paris, September 10th. MS. Letter.*

The "instruction," alluded to at the beginning of the above extracts from Mr. Oswald's letter, and also in Dr. Franklin's letter of September 8th, is as follows.

"*Article IV.* In case you find the American Commissioners are not at liberty to treat on any terms short of independence, you are to declare to them, that you have authority to make that concession; our ardent wish for peace, disposing us to purchase it at the price of acceding to the complete independence of the Thirteen Colonies, namely, New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Three Lower Counties on

one of his Majesty's principal secretaries of state, wherein your conduct in communicating to us the fourth article of your instructions appears to have been approved by his Majesty. I suppose, therefore, that there is no impropriety in my requesting a copy of that instruction; and if you see none, I wish to receive it

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the Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, in North America."

From Thomas Townshend to Richard Oswald. — "I am commanded to signify to you his Majesty's approbation of your conduct, in communicating to the American Commissioners the Fourth Article of your Instructions, which could not but convince them, that the negotiation for peace, and the cession of independence to the Thirteen United Colonies, were intended to be carried on, and concluded with the Commissioners in Europe. Those gentlemen having expressed their satisfaction concerning that article, it is hoped they will not entertain a doubt of his Majesty's determination to exercise in the fullest extent the powers with which the Act of Parliament has invested him, by granting to America full, complete, and unconditional independence, in the most explicit manner as an article of treaty." — *Whitehall, September 1st. MS. Letter.*

From Thomas Townshend to Richard Oswald. — "I received on Saturday last your packets of the 10th and 11th of this month. A meeting of the King's confidential servants was held as soon as possible to consider the contents of them; and it was at once agreed to make the alteration in the commission proposed to you by Mr. Jay. I trust that the readiness, with which this proposal was accepted, will be considered as an ample testimony of the openness and sincerity with which the government of this country is disposed to treat with the Americans." — *Whitehall, September 20th. MS. Letter.*

From Richard Oswald to Thomas Townshend. — "When the privilege of fishing was asked by Dr. Franklin in August, drying the fish in Newfoundland was not mentioned particularly, and I did not think it proper to appear so attentive and tenacious of such like indulgences, as to ask any questions about it. And when lately demanded, although I objected, yet I did not insist for the same reason. And now, although Mr. Jay seems not positively to say that the privilege is indispensable, yet I own I wish much that it may not be considered in England as a matter of such consequence, as to occasion a claim to exception; for, to tell the truth, when Dr. Franklin stated the privilege of fishing, I suspected drying was included, though not mentioned. Otherwise I should have wondered at his asking our leave for the Americans catching fish in the open seas, so near their own coasts, and wrote so in my letters at the time." — *Paris, October 11th. MS. Letter.*

from you, hoping it may be of use in removing some of the difficulties that obstruct our proceeding. With great and sincere esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS.

Passy, 9 September, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received the very kind, friendly letter you were so good as to write to me by Dr. Broussonnet. Be assured, that I long earnestly for a return of those peaceful times, when I could sit down in sweet society with my English philosophical friends, communicating to each other new discoveries, and proposing improvements of old ones; all tending to extend the power of man over matter, avert or diminish the evils he is subject to, or augment the number of his enjoyments. Much more happy should I be thus employed in your most desirable company, than in that of all the grandees of the earth projecting plans of mischief, however necessary they may be supposed for obtaining greater good.

I am glad to learn by the Doctor that your great

* It appears by the following note to Dr. Franklin, that Mr. Hartley was likewise at this time in Paris.

"Hôtel d'Yorck, 7 September, 1782.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"I beg of you not to forget your letter to Mr. Fox. The purpose of my journey to England will be, to do the best in my power for things and persons, and particularly for my friends. If you have any other private letters, send them to me; I will deliver them. I hope likewise to be personally charged with the answers. I am better this morning, and shall certainly set out very early to-morrow morning. Pray give my best compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Jay, and Mr. Temple Franklin. I wish you all health till I have the pleasure of seeing you again. Your ever most affectionate friend,

"D. HARTLEY."

work goes on. I admire your magnanimity in the undertaking, and the perseverance with which you have prosecuted it.

I join with you most perfectly in the charming wish you so well express, "that such measures may be taken by both parties as may tend to the elevation of both, rather than the destruction of either." If any thing has happened endangering one of them, my comfort is, that I endeavoured earnestly to prevent it, and gave honest, faithful advice, which, if it had been regarded, would have been effectual. And still, if proper means are used to produce, not only peace, but what is much more interesting, a thorough reconciliation, a few years may heal the wounds that have been made in our happiness, and produce a degree of prosperity of which at present we can hardly form a conception. With great and sincere esteem and respect, I am, dear Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO THE EARL OF GRANTHAM.

Passy, 11 September, 1782.

MY LORD,

A long and severe indisposition has delayed my acknowledging the receipt of the letter your Lordship did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Fitzherbert.

You do me justice in believing, that I agree with you in earnestly wishing the establishment of an honorable and lasting peace; and I am happy to be assured by your Lordship, that it is the system of the ministers with whom you are coöperating. I know it to be the sincere desire of the United States; and, with such dispositions on both sides, there is reason to hope, that the good work in its progress will meet with little difficulty. A small one has occurred in the com-

mencement, with which Mr. Oswald will acquaint you. I flatter myself that means will be found on your part for removing it; and my best endeavours in removing the subsequent ones (if any should arise) may be relied on.

I had the honor of being known to your Lordship's father. On several occasions he manifested a regard for me, and a confidence in me. I shall be happy if my conduct in the present important business may procure me the same rank in the esteem of his worthy successor. I am, with sincere respect, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant, B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 17 September, 1782.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Since those acknowledged in my last, I have received your several favors of August the 16th,* 20th, and 26th. I have been a long time afflicted with the gravel and gout, which have much indisposed me for writing. I am even now in pain, but will no longer delay some answer.

I did not perfectly comprehend the nature of your appointment respecting the refugees, and I supposed you would in a subsequent letter explain it. But, as I now find you have declined the service, such explanation is become unnecessary.

I did receive the paper you inquire about, entitled *Preliminaries*, and dated May, 1782; but it was from you, and I know nothing of their having been com-

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. III. p. 502.

municated to this court. The third proposition, "that, in case the negotiation between Great Britain and the allies of America should not succeed, but the war continue between them, America should act and be treated as a neutral nation," appeared at first sight inadmissible, being contrary to our treaty. The truce, too, seems not to have been desired by any of the parties. With unalterable esteem and affection, I am, my dear friend, ever yours, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM RICHARD OSWALD TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 24 September, 1782.

SIR,

Having received, by a courier just now arrived, a letter from Mr. Secretary Townshend, in answer to mine, which went by the messenger, despatched from hence on the 12th, I take this opportunity of Mr. Whitefoord to send you a copy of it.* I hope he will bring good accounts of your health, which I sincerely wish, and am your Excellency's, &c.

RICHARD OSWALD.

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* This was a short letter, dated September 20th, an extract from which, containing the most important part, is printed above, p. 408.

FROM BENJAMIN LINCOLN, SECRETARY OF WAR, TO B. FRANKLIN.*

Requesting Information respecting certain Regulations in European Armies. — State of the American Army. — French Troops in the United States.

Philadelphia, 25 September, 1782.

SIR,

Congress has ordered me to prepare and lay before them a state of the pay, rations, and subsistence of the officers and men in the armies of the different powers in Europe. As these often vary, I have no means of procuring the necessary information with accuracy from any books I have seen. I am under the necessity, therefore, of requesting that your Excellency would be so good as to procure and forward to me the state of the pay, rations, and subsistence of the officers and men in the service of France, Spain, and the Emperor of Germany.

The state of matters here, your Excellency will receive from the secretary of foreign affairs. I cannot, however, avoid mentioning to you, that we have now a better army in the field, than we have had at any time before during the war. They are well clothed and are in high discipline. Count de Rochambeau a few days since was polite enough, on seeing the American troops, to compliment the Commander-in-chief with having a Prussian army.

The troops of His Most Christian Majesty are joining the main army on the Hudson. I should be wanting in duty, and deny myself a particular pleasure, did I not assure you, that the order and regularity

* General Lincoln was chosen Secretary of War by Congress on 30th of September, 1781.

uniformly observed by this army, and the cheerfulness with which they have fought and bled in our cause, have endeared them to the people of America; and they are held in esteem, not merely by the thread of policy, but by the permanent bond of sincere friendship. There is the greatest harmony between the troops of the two armies, and no other contest but what arises from the spirit of the soldier, and what ought to be considered an honorable pursuit, to excel in the field and in acts of politeness and generosity. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. Lincoln.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, 26 September, 1782.

Sir,

I have just received yours dated the 9th of August, which mentions your not having heard from me since March. I have, however, written sundry letters, viz. of April the 8th, and June the 12th, June the 25th and 29th, August the 12th, and September the 3d, and sent copies of the same, which I hope cannot all have miscarried.

The negotiations for peace have hitherto amounted to little more than mutual professions of sincere desires, &c., being obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions appointing their plenipotentiaries. The objections made to those for treating with France, Spain, and Holland were first removed; and by the enclosed * it seems, that our objections to that for treating with us will now be removed also, so that we expect to begin in a few days our negotia-

* This refers to Mr. Oswald's commission, which may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X. p. 80.

tions. But there are so many interests to be considered and settled, in a peace between five different nations, that it will be well not to flatter ourselves with a very speedy conclusion.

I mentioned, in a former letter, my having communicated to Count de Vergennes the state of American commerce, which you sent me, and my having urged its consideration, &c. Enclosed is a copy of a letter received from that minister on the subject.

The copy of General Carleton's letter, and the bills of exchange, which you mentioned as enclosed, do not appear. I hope soon to have a better opportunity of writing, when I shall be fuller. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Mr. Barclay's Appointment as Consul confirmed.

Translation.

Versailles, 3 October, 1782.

SIR,

I have the honor to return you the commission appointing Thomas Barclay consul of the United States, to reside in France, and I indorse the *exequatur*, which is requisite for the exercise of his functions. I must inform you that the latter of these will require the Admiral's signature previously to its being registered, either by the secretary of the Admiralty at L'Orient, where Mr. Barclay intends to fix his residence, or by those of other ports of the kingdom, where commercial considerations may require his presence. I have the honor to be, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Proposition for a Commercial Convention.

Bath, 4 October, 1782.

My dear Friend,

I only write one line to you, to let you know that I am not forgetful of you or of our common concerns. I have not heard any thing from the ministry yet; I believe it is a kind of vacation with them, before the meeting of Parliament. I have told you of a proposition, which I have had some thoughts to make as a kind of copartnership in commerce. I send you a purposed temporary convention, which I have drawn up. You are to consider it only as one I recommend. The words underlined are grafted upon the proposition of my Memorial, dated May 19th, 1778. You will see the principle, which I have in my thoughts to extend for the purpose of restoring our ancient copartnership generally.

I cannot tell you what event things may take, but my thoughts are always employed in endeavouring to arrange that system upon which the *China Vase*, lately shattered, may be cemented together, upon principles of compact and connexion, instead of dependence.

I have met with a sentiment in this country which gives some alarm, viz. lest the unity of government in America should be uncertain, and the States reject the authority of Congress. Some passages in General Washington's letter have given weight to these doubts. I do not hear of any tendency to this opinion; *that the American States will break to pieces, and then we may still conquer them.* I believe all that folly is extinguished. But many serious and well-disposed persons are alarmed, lest *this should be the ill-fated mo-*

ment for relaxing the powers of the union, and annihilating the cement of confederation, (*vide* Washington's letter,) and that Great Britain should thereby lose her best and wisest hope of being reconnected with the American States *unitedly.* I should, for one, think it the greatest misfortune. Pray give me some opinion upon this.

You see there is likewise another turn, which may be given to this sentiment by intemperate and disappointed people, who may indulge a passionate revenge for their own disappointments, by endeavouring to excite general distrust, discord, and disunion. I wish to be prepared and guarded at all points.

I beg my best compliments to your colleagues; be so good as to show this letter to them. I beg, particularly, my condolence (and I hope congratulation) to Mr. Adams; I hear that he has been very dangerously ill, but that he is again recovered. I hope the latter part is true, and that we shall all survive to set our hands to some future compacts of common interest, and common affection, between our two countries. Your ever affectionate D. HARTLEY.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Progress of the Negotiation.

Paris, 14 October, 1782.

SIR,

I have but just received information of this opportunity, and have only time allowed to write a few lines.

In my last of the 26th past, I mentioned that the negotiation for peace had been obstructed by the want of due form in the English commissions appointing their plenipotentiaries. In that for treating with us,

the mentioning our States by their public name had been avoided, which we objected to; another is come, of which I send a copy enclosed. We have now made several preliminary propositions, which the English minister, Mr. Oswald, has approved, and sent to his court. He thinks they will be approved there, but I have some doubts. In a few days, however, the answer expected will determine. By the first of these articles, the King of Great Britain renounces, for himself and successors, all claim and pretension to dominion or territory within the Thirteen United States; and the boundaries are described as in our instructions, except that the line between Nova Scotia and New England is to be settled by commissioners after the peace. By another article, the fishery in the American seas is to be freely exercised by the Americans, wherever they might formerly exercise it while united with Great Britain. By another, the citizens and subjects of each nation are to enjoy the same protection and privileges in each others' ports and countries, respecting commerce, duties, &c., that are enjoyed by native subjects. The articles are drawn up very fully by Mr. Jay, who I suppose sends you a copy; if not, it will go by the next opportunity. If these articles are agreed to, I apprehend little difficulty in the rest. Something has been mentioned about the refugees and English debts, but not insisted on; as we declared at once, that, whatever confiscations had been made in America, being in virtue of the laws of particular States, the Congress had no authority to repeal those laws, and therefore could give us none to stipulate for such repeal.

I have been honored with the receipt of your letters, Nos. 14 and 15. I have also received two letters from

Mr. Lewis R. Morris, both dated the 6th of July, and one dated the 10th of August, enclosing bills for

68,290 livres,
71,380
9,756

In all 149,426 livres,

being intended for the payment of ministers' salaries for the two first quarters of this year. But, as these bills came so late, that all those salaries were already paid, I shall make no use of the bills, but lay them by till further orders; and, the salaries of different ministers not having all the same times of falling due, as they had different commencements, I purpose to get all their accounts settled and reduced to the same period, and send you the state of them, that you may be clear in future orders. I see in one of the estimates sent me, that a quarter's salary of a minister is reckoned at 14,513 livres, in the other it is reckoned 16,667 livres, and the bill for 9,756* livres is mentioned as intended to pay a balance due on the remittance of the 68,290 livres. Being unacquainted with the state of your exchange, I do not well comprehend this, and therefore leave the whole for the present, as I have said above. Permit me only to hint for your consideration, whether it may not be well hereafter to omit mention of sterling in our appointments, since we have severed from the country to which that denomination of money is peculiar; and also to order the payment of your ministers in such a manner, that they may know exactly what they are to receive, and not be subject to the fluctuations of ex-

* This was not merely to pay a balance, but an excess on account of contingencies.— *Note by Mr. Livingston.*

change. If it is that, which occasions the difference between 14,513 for the first quarter, and the 16,667 for the second, it is considerable. I think we have no right to any advantage by the exchange, nor should we be liable to any loss from it. Hitherto we have taken 15,000 for a quarter, (subject however to the allowance or disallowance of Congress,) which is lower than the medium between those two extremes.

The different accounts given of Lord Shelburne's character, with respect to sincerity, induced the ministry here to send over M. de Rayneval, Secretary to the Council, to converse with him, and endeavour to form by that means a more perfect judgment of what was to be expected from the negotiations. He was five or six days in England, saw all the ministers, and returned quite satisfied, that they are sincerely desirous of peace, so that the negotiations now go on with some prospect of success. But the court and people of England are very changeable. A little turn of fortune in their favor sometimes turns their heads; and I shall not think a speedy peace to be depended on, till I see the treaties signed. I am obliged to finish. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 15 October, 1782.

SIR,

A long and painful illness has prevented my corresponding with your Excellency regularly.

Mr. Jay has, I believe, acquainted you with the obstructions our peace negotiations have met with, and that they are at length removed. By the next courier expected from London, we may be able perhaps to

form some judgment of the probability of success, so far as relates to our part of the peace. How likely the other powers are to settle their pretensions, I cannot yet learn. In the mean time, America is gradually growing more easy, by the enemy's evacuation of their posts; as you will see by some intelligence I enclose. With great respect I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM GEORGE WASHINGTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Head-Quarters, 18 October, 1782.

SIR,

I have been honored with two favors of your Excellency, one presented by the Count de Ségur, of the 2d of April, the other delivered by the Prince de Broglie, of the 8th, both of which were rendered doubly agreeable by the pleasure I had in receiving them from the hands of two such amiable and accomplished young gentlemen. Independently of my esteem for your Excellency, be assured, Sir, that my respect and regard for the French nation at large, to whom this country is under so great obligations, as well as the very favorable impressions I have conceived for their particular characters, will secure my warmest attention to the persons of these distinguished young noblemen.

I am much obliged by the political information, which you have taken the trouble to convey to me, but feel myself much embarrassed in my wish to make you a return in kind. Early in the season, the expectations of America were much raised in consequence of the change of the British ministry, and the measures of Parliament; but events have shown that our hopes have risen too high. The death of the Marquis of Rockingham, the advancement of the Earl of Shel-

burne, and the delays of negotiation, have given us very different impressions from those we at first received. We now begin again to reflect upon the persevering obstinacy of the King, the wickedness of his ministry, and the haughty pride of the nation, which recall to our minds very disagreeable recollections, and a probable continuance of our present troubles. The military operations of the campaign are drawing to a close without any very important events on this side of the water, unless the evacuation of Charleston, which is generally expected, but not yet known to me, should take place, and form a paragraph in the page of this year's history.

The British fleet from the West Indies still continues in New York. I have not been able yet to decide on the enemy's intentions there. It is generally thought, that a detachment of their troops will sail, when the fleet returns to the West Indies, where it is conjectured their efforts for the winter will be prosecuted with vigor. I have the honor to be, &c.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

FROM THOMAS TOWNSHEND TO B. FRANKLIN.

Introducing Mr. Strachey.

Whitehall, 23 October, 1782.

SIR,

As Mr. Strachey* is going from hence to Paris, with some particulars for Mr. Oswald, which were not easily to be explained in writing, I take the liberty of introducing him to your acquaintance, though I am not sure that he is not a little known to you. The confidential situation, in which he stands with me,

* Mr. Strachey was Under-Secretary of State in the Department of Mr. Townshend.

makes me particularly desirous of presenting him to you.

I believe, Sir, I am enough known to you, for you to believe me, when I say, that there has not been from the beginning a single person more averse to the unhappy war, or who wishes more earnestly than I do for a return of peace and mutual amity between Great Britain and America. I am, with great regard, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

T. TOWNSHEND.

TO THOMAS TOWNSHEND.

Passy, 4 November, 1782.

SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me by Mr. Strachey, and was much pleased with the opportunity it gave me of renewing and increasing my acquaintance with a gentleman of so amiable and deserving a character.

I am sensible you have ever been averse to the measures that brought on this unhappy war; I have, therefore, no doubt of the sincerity of your wishes for a return of peace. Mine are equally earnest. Nothing, therefore, except the beginning of the war, has given me more concern than to learn at the conclusion of our conferences, that it is not likely to be soon ended. Be assured, no endeavours on my part would be wanting to remove any difficulties that may have arisen, or, even if a peace were made, to procure afterwards any changes in the treaty, that might tend to render it more perfect, and the peace more durable. But we, who are here at so great a distance from our constituents, have not the possibility of obtaining in a few days fresh instructions, as is the case with your negotiators, and are therefore obliged to insist on what

is conformable to those we have, and at the same time appears to us just and reasonable. With great esteem and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.*

* *From Richard Oswald to Thomas Townshend.* — "Mr. Jay, after repeating his wishes that Great Britain might determine in a manner suitable to the present situation of things, said, that, in case we meant to close with them on this occasion, he would take the liberty to request that his Majesty would order his ambassadors at the neutral courts to give so much countenance to the peace with America, as formally to intimate its being in the train of negotiation, and, when signed, that the same also should be notified. The advice of this he said would soon reach America, and would produce the happiest effects there, as well to our benefit as theirs; even although the final conclusion must wait a settlement with France. That even that conclusion would also feel the benefit of those negotiations.

"Soon after, Mr. Adams, the other commissioner, called upon me, and expressed himself equally anxious that there might be an end to all our differences. In the mean time, he delivered to me the enclosed packet from their Congress to Mr. Laurens, with a request that I would send it by the first courier, and recommend it so as to get safe to his hands, which I promised to do, and hope it will be taken care of. Mr. Adams also signified in like manner, as Mr. Jay had done, a wish that the abovementioned intimation might be made at the neutral courts. He seemed so earnest about it, that I could not avoid asking him as to the object of such intimation. He answered, that, among other things, it would make them more independent, or indifferent about this court, which they wished exceedingly might be brought about; that neither he nor Mr. Jay had any particular instructions relative to this court, nor had any correspondence with it, further than as they were bound by the letter of their treaty with them. Farther than that, he said, they gave themselves no concern about them; that, in case of a particular commission, long residence, and habits of correspondence, it was natural to suppose a correspondent complaisance would be created even under the guidance of the most upright intentions and conduct upon the whole; but as to them, this gentleman said, they were not even under those kinds of biases." — *Paris, November 7th. MS. Letter.*

From Mr. Strachey to Thomas Townshend. — "Since Mr. Adams came here, the commissioners have taken more notice of the refusal of admitting their having the privilege of drying in Newfoundland, than I expected from what they told me at settling the plan of treaty, which was sent to England. But at last, after a great deal of conversation at different times on the subject, it was agreed to be left out, upon condition of their being allowed to dry upon any of the unsettled parts of the coast of Nova Scotia, when they happened to be so far from home as that their fish might run some risk of being spoiled before they reached

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Introducing the Baron de Kermelin.

Passy, 7 November, 1782.

SIR,

The Baron de Kermelin, a Swedish gentleman of distinction, recommended strongly to me by his Excellency, the ambassador of that nation to this court, as a person highly esteemed in his own, purposes a journey through North America, to view its natural productions, acquaint himself with its commerce, and acquire such information as may be useful to his country, in the communication and connexion of interests that seem to be growing, and probably may soon become considerable, between the two nations. I therefore beg leave to introduce him to you, and request that you would present him to the President of Congress, and to such other persons as you shall think may be useful to him in his views; and I recommend him earnestly to those civilities, which you have a pleasure in showing to strangers of merit. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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their own shores. Dr. Franklin said he believed it would be only on such occasions, that they would use the privilege, and even then it would be only for a partial drying and salting; so as to prevent the fish from spoiling before they went home, and delivered them to their wives and children to complete and finish the drying.

"He also said, 'I observe, as to *catching fish*, you mention only the Banks of Newfoundland. Why not all other places, and amongst others the Gulf of St. Lawrence? Are you afraid there are not fish enough, or that we should catch too many? At the same time you know, that we shall bring the greatest part of the money we get for that fish to Great Britain, to pay for your manufactures.' He agreed it might not be proper to have a mixture of their people with ours for drying in Newfoundland. But he supposed there would be no inconvenience in throwing on shore the fish for a few days, on an unsettled beach, bay, or harbour, on the coast of Nova Scotia." — *Paris, November. MS. Letter.*

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

On the Indemnification of American Loyalists.

Passy, 26 November, 1782

SIR,

You may well remember, that in the beginning of our conferences, before the other Commissioners arrived, on your mentioning to me a retribution for the Royalists, whose estates had been confiscated, I acquainted you that nothing of that kind could be stipulated by us, the confiscation being made by virtue of laws of particular States, which the Congress had no power to contravene or dispense with, and therefore could give us no such authority in our commission. And I gave it as my opinion and advice, honestly and cordially, that, if a reconciliation was intended, no mention should be made in our negotiations of those people; for, they having done infinite mischief to our properties, by wantonly burning and destroying farm houses, villages, towns, if compensation for their losses were insisted on, we should certainly exhibit again such an account of all the ravages they had committed, which would necessarily recall to view scenes of barbarity, that must inflame, instead of conciliating, and tend to perpetuate an enmity that we all profess a desire of extinguishing. Understanding, however, from you, that this was a point your ministry had at heart, I wrote concerning it to Congress, and I have lately received the following resolution, viz.

"*By the United States, in Congress assembled.*

"September 10th, 1782.

"*Resolved*, That the Secretary for Foreign Affairs be, and he is hereby, directed to obtain, as speedily as

possible, authentic returns of the slaves and other property, which have been carried off or destroyed in the course of the war by the enemy, and to transmit the same to the ministers plenipotentiary for negotiating peace.

"*Resolved*, That, in the mean time, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs inform the said ministers, that many thousands of slaves, and other property, to a very great amount, have been carried off, or destroyed, by the enemy; and that, in the opinion of Congress, the great loss of property, which the citizens of the United States have sustained by the enemy, will be considered by the several States as an insuperable bar to their making restitution or indemnification to the former owners of property, which has been, or may be forfeited to, or confiscated by, any of the States."

In consequence of these resolutions and circular letters of the Secretary, the Assembly of Pennsylvania, then sitting, passed the following act, viz.

"*State of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly.*

"Wednesday, September 18th, 1782.

"The bill, entitled 'An act for procuring an estimate of the damages sustained by the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, from the troops and adherents of the King of Great Britain during the present war,' was read a second time.

"Ordered to be transcribed, and printed for public consideration.

"Extract from the minutes.

"PETER Z. LLOYD,
"*Clerk of the General Assembly.*"

"Whereas great damages, of the most wanton nature, have been committed by the armies of the King

of Great Britain, or their adherents, within the territory of the United States of North America, unwarranted by the practice of civilized nations, and only to be accounted for from the vindictive spirit of the said King and his officers; and whereas an accurate account and estimate of such damages, more especially the waste and destruction of property, may be very useful to the people of the United States of America, in forming a future treaty of peace, and, in the mean time, may serve to exhibit in a true light to the nations of Europe the conduct of the said King, his ministers, officers, and adherents; to the end, therefore, that proper measures be taken to ascertain the damages aforesaid, which have been done to the citizens and inhabitants of Pennsylvania, in the course of the present war within this State; Be it enacted by the House of Representatives of the freemen of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and by the authority of the same, that in every county of this State, which has been invaded by the armies, soldiers, or adherents of the King of Great Britain, the Commissioners of every such county shall immediately meet together, each within their county, and issue directions to the assessors of the respective townships, districts, and places within such county, to call upon the inhabitants of every township and place, to furnish accounts and estimates of the damages, waste, spoil, and destruction, which have been done and committed as aforesaid, upon the property, real or personal, within the same township or place, since the first day of , which was in the year of our Lord 177 , and the same accounts and estimates to be transmitted to the Commissioners without delay. And, if any person or persons shall refuse or neglect to make out such accounts

and estimates, the said assessors of the township or place shall, from their own knowledge, and by any other reasonable and lawful method, take and render such an account and estimate of all damage done or committed, as aforesaid; Provided always, that all such accounts and estimates, to be made out and transmitted as aforesaid, shall contain a narrative of the time and circumstances; and, if in the power of the person aggrieved, the names of the general, or other officers or adherents, of the enemy, by whom the damage in any case was done, or under whose orders the army, detachment, party, or persons, committing the same, acted, at that time; and also the name and condition of the person or persons, whose property was so damaged or destroyed; and that all such accounts and estimates be made in current money, upon oath or affirmation of the sufferer, or of others having knowledge concerning the same; and that in every case it be set forth, whether the party injured hath received any satisfaction for his loss, and by whom the same was given.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the said Commissioners, having obtained the said accounts and estimates from the assessor of the several townships and places, shall proceed to inspect and register the same in a book, to be provided for that purpose, distinguishing the districts and townships, and entering those of each place together; and if any account and estimate be imperfect, or not sufficiently verified and established, the said Commissioners shall have power, and they, or any two of them, are hereby authorized, to summon and compel any person, whose evidence they shall think necessary, to appear before them at a day and place appointed, to be summoned upon oath or affirmation, concerning any damage or

injury as aforesaid; and the said Commissioners shall, upon the call and demand of the President or Vice-President of the Supreme Executive Council, deliver, or send, to the Secretary of the said Council all or any of the original accounts and estimates aforesaid, and shall also deliver, or send, to the said Secretary copies of the book aforesaid, or any part or parts thereof, upon reasonable notice. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all losses of negro or mulatto slaves and servants, who have been deluded and carried away by the enemies of the United States, and have not been recovered or recompensed, shall be comprehended within the accounts and estimates aforesaid; and that the Commissioners and assessors of any county, which had not been invaded as aforesaid, shall nevertheless inquire after, and procure accounts and estimates of any damages suffered by the loss of such servants and slaves, as is herein before directed as to other property.

"And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that the charges and expenses of executing this act, as to the pay of the said Commissioners and assessors, shall be as in other cases; and that witnesses shall be rewarded for their loss of time and trouble, as witnesses summoned to appear in the courts of quarter sessions of the peace; and the said charges and expenses shall be defrayed by the Commonwealth; but paid, in the first instance, out of the hands of the Treasurer of the county, for county rates, and levies upon orders drawn by the Commissioners of the proper county."

We have not yet had time to hear what has been done by the other Assemblies; but I have no doubt that similar acts will be made use of by all of them,

and that the mass of evidence produced by the execution of those acts, not only of the enormities committed by those people, under the direction of the British generals, but of those committed by the British troops themselves, will form a record, that must render the British name odious in America to the latest generations. In that authentic record will be found the burning of the fine towns of Charlestown, near Boston; of Falmouth, just before winter, when the sick, the aged, the women and children, were driven to seek shelter where they could hardly find it; of Norfolk, in the midst of winter; of New London, of Fairfield, of Esopus, &c., besides near a hundred and fifty miles of well settled country laid waste; every house and barn burnt, and many hundreds of farmers, with their wives and children, butchered and scalped.

The present British ministers, when they reflect a little, will certainly be too equitable to suppose, that their nation has a right to make an unjust war (which they have always allowed this against us to be), and do all sorts of unnecessary mischief, unjustifiable by the practice of any individual people, which those they make war with are to suffer without claiming any satisfaction; but that, if Britons, or their adherents, are in return deprived of any property, it is to be restored to them, or they are to be indemnified. The British troops can never excuse their barbarities. They were unprovoked. The Loyalists may say in excuse of theirs, that they were exasperated by the loss of their estates, and it was revenge. They have then had their revenge. *Is it right they should have both?*

Some of those people may have merit in their regard for Britain, and who espoused her cause from affection; these it may become you to reward. But there are many of them who were waverers, and were only de-

termined to engage in it by some occasional circumstance or appearances; these have not much of either merit or demerit; and there are others, who have abundance of demerit respecting your country, having by their falsehoods and misrepresentations brought on and encouraged the continuance of the war; these, instead of being recompensed, should be punished.

It is usual among Christian people at war to profess always a desire of peace; but, if the ministers of one of the parties choose to insist particularly on a certain article, which they have known the others are not and cannot be empowered to agree to, what credit can they expect should be given to such professions?

Your ministers require, that we should receive again into our bosom those who have been our bitterest enemies, and restore their properties who have destroyed ours, and this, while the wounds they have given us are still bleeding! It is many years since your nation expelled the Stuarts and their adherents, and confiscated their estates. Much of your resentment against them may by this time be abated; yet, if we should propose it, and insist on it as an article of our treaty with you, that that family should be recalled and the forfeited estates of its friends restored, would you think us serious in our professions of earnestly desiring peace?

I must repeat my opinion, that it is best for you to drop all mention of the refugees. We have proposed, indeed, nothing but what we think best for you as well as ourselves. But, if you will have them mentioned, let it be in an article, in which you may provide, that they shall exhibit accounts of their losses to the Commissioners, hereafter to be appointed, who should examine the same, together with the accounts now preparing in America of the damages done by

them, and state the account; and that, if a balance appears in their favor, it shall be paid by us to you, and by you divided among them as you shall think proper; and if the balance is found due to us, it shall be paid by you.

Give me leave, however, to advise you to prevent the necessity of so dreadful a discussion by dropping the article, that we may write to America and stop the inquiry. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 27 November, 1782.

MY DEAREST SIR,

I am so agitated with the present crisis, that I cannot help writing to you, to beseech you again and again to meditate upon some mild expedient about the refugees, or to give a favorable ear and helping hand to such as may turn up.

Both sides agree, that the matter of expense is nothing; and the matter of honor in my opinion is least to *that* side, which has most sense and most justice on its side. It seems to me, that the matter of present *peace*, and that of *future happiness*, are the only points of true concern to either.

If I can judge of favorable moments, the present is of all others most favorable to our views of *reconciliation*. We have liberal American Commissioners at Paris, a liberal English Commissioner, and a liberal first minister for England. All these circumstances may vanish to-morrow, if this treaty blows over.

If you wanted to break off your treaty, I am perfectly sensible that you could not do it on grounds in which America would more join with you, than this

of the refugees. On the other hand, if England wanted to break, she could not wish for better ground on *her* side. You do not break; and therefore I conclude you *both* sincere. But in this way, I see the treaty is likely of *itself* to break. I pray then, my dearest, dearest Sir, that you would a little take this matter to heart.

If the refugees are not silenced, you must be sensible what constant prompters to evil measures you leave us, what perpetual sources of bad information. If the minister is able, on the other hand, to hold up his head on this one point, you must see how much easier it will be for you both to carry on the great work of re-union, as far as relates to prince and people. We are not well informed about the deeds of the refugees in England; and we can only now be well informed by publications, that would do irreparable mischief.

Besides, you are the most magnanimous nation; and can excuse things to your people, which *we* can less excuse to *ours*. Not to mention, that, when Congress sent you their last resolutions, they were not aware that you would be so near a settlement as you are at present. To judge which is the hardest task, yours, or England's, put yourself in Lord Shelburne's place. The only marks of confidence shown him at Paris are such as he *dares not name;* and the only marks promised him are *future* national ones. England has given much ground of confidence to America. In my opinion, England will do *her* business in the way of RECONCILIATION, very much in proportion as you do *your* business generously at the present peace. England is to be won, as well as America is to be won; and I beg you would think with yourself and your colleagues about the means. Excuse this freedom, my

dearest Sir; it is the result of a very warm heart, that thinks a little property *nothing*, to much happiness. I do not, however, ask you to do a dishonorable thing, but simply to save England; and to give our English ministry the means of saying, on the 5th of December, we have done *more* than the last ministry have done. I hope you will not think this zeal persecution; for I shall not mention this subject to you again, of my own accord.

I know you have justice on your side; I know you may talk of precedents; but there is such a thing as forgiveness, as generosity, and as a manly policy, that can share a small *loss*, rather than miss a greater *good*. I am, &c. B. VAUGHAN.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 29 November, 1782.

SIR,

I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency, that the Commissioners of the United States have agreed with Mr. Oswald on the preliminary articles of the peace between those States and Great Britain. To-morrow I hope we shall be able to communicate to your Excellency a copy of them. With great respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Enclosing a Copy of the Preliminary Articles.

Passy, 4 December, 1782.

SIR,

We detain the *Washington* a little longer, expecting an English passport for her in a few days, and,

as possibly some vessel bound for North America may sail before her, I write this line to inform you, that the French preliminaries with England are not yet signed, though we hope they may be very soon. Of ours I enclose a copy. The Dutch and Spain have yet made but little progress; and, as no definitive treaty will be signed till all are agreed, there may be time for Congress to give us further instructions, if they think proper. We hope the terms we have obtained will be satisfactory, though, to secure our main points, we may have yielded too much in favor of the loyalists. The quantity of aid to be afforded us remains undecided. I suppose something depends on the event of the treaty. By the *Washington* you will be fully informed of every thing. With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Difficulties in conveying Intelligence to America. — Supplies from France. — History of the Negotiation. — Principal Preliminaries between France and England agreed to. — Proceedings in Regard to Sweden.

Passy, 5 December, 1782.

SIR,

I am honored by your several letters, dated September 5th, 13th, 15th, and 18th.* I believe that the complaints you make in them, of my not writing, may ere now have appeared less necessary, as many of my letters written before those complaints must have

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV. pp. 10, 18, 19.

since come to hand. I will nevertheless mention some of the difficulties your ministers meet with, in keeping up a regular and punctual correspondence. We are far from the seaports, and not well informed, and often misinformed, about the sailing of vessels. Frequently we are told they are to sail in a week or two, and often they lie in the ports for months after, with our letters on board, either waiting for convoy, or for other reasons. The postoffice here is an unsafe conveyance; many of the letters we receive by it have evidently been opened, and doubtless the same happens to those we send; and, at this time particularly, there is so violent a curiosity in all kinds of people to know something relating to the negotiations, and whether peace may be expected, or a continuance of the war, that there are few private hands or travellers, that we can trust with carrying our despatches to the seacoast; and I imagine, that they may sometimes be opened and destroyed, because they cannot be well sealed.

Again, the observation you make, that the Congress ministers in Europe seem to form themselves into a privy council, transacting affairs without the privity or concurrence of the sovereign, may be in some respects just; but it should be considered, that, if they do not write as frequently as other ministers here do to their respective courts, or if, when they write, their letters are not regularly received, the greater distance of the seat of war, and the extreme irregularity of conveyances may be the causes, and not a desire of acting without the knowledge or orders of their constituents. There is no European court, to which an express cannot be sent from Paris in ten or fifteen days, and from most of them answers may be obtained in that time. There is, I imagine, no minister, who would

not think it safer to act by orders than from his own discretion; and yet, unless you leave more to the discretion of your ministers in Europe than courts usually do, your affairs may sometimes suffer extremely from the distance, which, in the time of war especially, may make it five or six months before the answer to a letter shall be received. I suppose the minister from this court will acquaint Congress with the King's sentiments respecting their very handsome present of a ship of the line. People in general here are much pleased with it.

I communicated, together with my memoir demanding a supply of money, copies of every paragraph in your late letters, which express so strongly the necessity of it. I have been constant in my solicitations both directly, and through the Marquis de Lafayette, who has employed himself diligently and warmly in the business. The negotiations for peace are, I imagine, one cause of the great delay and indecision on this occasion beyond what has been usual, as the quantum may be different if those negotiations do or do not succeed. We have not yet learned what we may expect. We have been told that we shall be aided, but it cannot be to the extent demanded; six millions have been mentioned, but not as a sum fixed. The minister tells me still, that he is working upon the subject, but cannot yet give a determinative answer. I know his good will to do the best for us that is possible.

It is in vain for me to repeat again what I have so often written, and what I find taken so little notice of, that there are bounds to every thing, and that the faculties of this nation are limited like those of all other nations. Some of you seem to have established as maxims the suppositions, that France has

money enough for all her occasions, and all ours besides; and that, if she does not supply us, it is owing to her want of will, or to my negligence. As to the first, I am sure it is not true; and to the second, I can only say I should rejoice as much as any man in being able to obtain more; and I shall also rejoice in the greater success of those who may take my place. You desire to be very particularly acquainted with "every step which tends to negotiation." I am, therefore, encouraged to send you the first part of the *Journal*, which accidents, and a long, severe illness interrupted; but which, from notes I have by me, may be continued if thought proper. In its present state, it is hardly fit for the inspection of Congress, certainly not for public view. I confide it therefore to your prudence.

The arrival of Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Laurens has relieved me from much anxiety, which must have continued, if I had been left to finish the treaty alone; and it has given me the more satisfaction, as I am sure the business has profited by their assistance.

Much of the summer has been taken up in objecting against the powers given by Great Britain, and in removing those objections. The not using any expressions, that might imply an acknowledgment of our independence, seemed at first industriously to be avowed. But our refusing otherwise to treat, at length induced them to get over that difficulty, and then we came to the point of making propositions. Those made by Mr. Jay and me before the arrival of the other gentlemen, you will find in the paper A, which was sent by the British plenipotentiary to London for the King's consideration. After some weeks, an under-secretary, Mr. Strachey, arrived, with whom we had much contestation about the boundaries and other articles, which

he proposed and we settled; some of which he carried to London, and returned with the propositions, some adopted, others omitted or altered, and new ones added, which you will see in paper B. We spent many days in disputing, and at length agreed on and signed the preliminaries, which you will see by this conveyance. The British minister struggled hard for two points, that the favors granted to the loyalists should be extended, and all our fishery contracted. We silenced them on the first, by threatening to produce an account of the mischief done by those people; and as to the second, when they told us they could not possibly agree to it as we requested it, and must refer it to the ministry in London, we produced a new article to be referred at the same time, with a note of facts in support of it, which you have, C.* Apparently, it seemed, that, to avoid the discussion of this, they suddenly changed their minds, dropped the

* The papers alluded to in this letter may be found in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X. pp. 88, 94, 106. The paper, marked C, was drawn up by Dr. Franklin, and is as follows.

ARTICLE PROPOSED AND READ TO THE COMMISSIONERS BEFORE SIGNING THE PRELIMINARY ARTICLES.

"It is agreed, that his Britannic Majesty will earnestly recommend it to his Parliament to provide for and make a compensation to the merchants and shopkeepers of Boston, whose goods and merchandise were seized and taken out of their stores, warehouses, and shops, by order of General Gage and others of his commanders and officers there; and also to the inhabitants of Philadelphia, for the goods taken away by his army there; and to make compensation, also, for the tobacco, rice, indigo, and negroes, &c., seized and carried off by his armies under Generals Arnold, Cornwallis, and others, from the States of Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, and also for all vessels and cargoes, belonging to the inhabitants of the said United States, which were stopped, seized, or taken, either in the ports, or on the seas, by his governors, or by his ships of war, before the declaration of war against the said States.

"And it is further agreed, that his Britannic Majesty will also earnestly recommend it to his Parliament to make compensation for all the

design of recurring to London, and agreed to allow the fishery as demanded.

You will find in the preliminaries some inaccurate and ambiguous expressions, that want explanation, and which may be explained in the definitive treaty; and, as the British ministry excluded our proposition relating to commerce, and the American prohibition of that with England may not be understood to cease merely by our concluding a treaty of peace, perhaps we may then, if the Congress shall think fit to direct it, obtain some compensation for the injuries done us,

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towns, villages, and farms, burnt and destroyed by his troops, or adherents, in the said United States.

FACTS.

"There existed a free commerce, upon mutual faith, between Great Britain and America. The merchants of the former credited the merchants and planters of the latter with great quantities of goods, on the common expectation, that the merchants, having sold the goods, would make the accustomed remittances; that the planters would do the same by the labor of their negroes, and the produce of that labor, tobacco, rice, indigo, &c.

"England, before the goods were sold in America, sends an armed force, seizes those goods in the stores; some even in the ships that brought them, and carries them off; seizes, also, and carries off the tobacco, rice, and indigo, provided by the planters to make returns, and even the negroes, from whose labor they might hope to raise other produce for that purpose.

"Britain now demands that the debts shall, nevertheless, be paid.

"Will she, can she, justly, refuse making compensation for such seizures?

"If a draper, who had sold a piece of linen to a neighbour on credit, should follow him, and take the linen from him by force, and then send a bailiff to arrest him for the debt, would any court of law or equity award the payment of the debt, without ordering a restitution of the cloth?

"Will not the debtors in America cry out, that, if this compensation be not made, they were betrayed by the pretended credit, and are now doubly ruined; first, by the enemy, and then by the negotiators at Paris, the goods and negroes sold them being taken from them, with all they had besides, and they are now to be obliged to pay for what they have been robbed of?"

as a condition of our opening again the trade. Every one of the present British ministry has, while in the ministry, declared the war against us as unjust, and nothing is clearer in reason, than that those, who injure others by an unjust war, should make full reparation. They have stipulated too, in these preliminaries, that, in evacuating our towns, they shall carry off no plunder, which is a kind of acknowledgment that they ought not to have done it before.

The reason given us for dropping the article relating to commerce was, that some statutes were in the way, which must be repealed before a treaty of that kind could be well formed, and that this was a matter to be considered in Parliament.

They wanted to bring their boundary down to the Ohio, and to settle their loyalists in the Illinois country. We did not choose such neighbours.

We communicated all the articles, as soon as they were signed, to Count de Vergennes, (except the separate one,) who thinks we have managed well, and told me, that we had settled what was most apprehended as a difficulty in the work of a general peace, by obtaining the declaration of our independency.

December 14*th.* I have this day learned, that the principal preliminaries between France and England are agreed on, to wit;

1. France is to enjoy the right of fishing and drying on all the west coast of Newfoundland, down to Cape Ray. Miquelon and St. Pierre to be restored, and may be fortified.

2. Senegal remains to France, and Goree to be restored. The Gambia entirely to England.

3. All the places taken from France in the East Indies to be restored, with a certain quantity of territory round them.

4. In the West Indies, Grenada and the Grenadines, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat, to be restored to England; St. Lucia to France. Dominique to remain with France, and St. Vincent's to be neutralized.

5. No Commissioner at Dunkirk.

The points not yet quite settled are the territory round the places in the Indies, and neutralization of St. Vincent's. Apparently these will not create much difficulty.

Holland has yet hardly done any thing in her negotiation.

Spain offers for Gibraltar to restore West Florida and the Bahamas. An addition is talked of the Island of Guadaloupe, which France will cede to Spain in exchange for the other half of Hispaniola, and Spain to England, but England, it is said, chose rather Porto Rico. Nothing yet concluded.

As soon as I received the commission and instructions for treating with Sweden, I waited on the ambassador here, who told me he daily expected a courier on that subject. Yesterday he wrote a note to acquaint me, that he would call on me to-day, having something to communicate to me. Being obliged to go to Paris, I waited on him, when he showed me the full powers he had just received, and I showed him mine. We agreed to meet on Wednesday next, exchange copies, and proceed to business. His commission has some polite expressions in it, to wit; "that his Majesty thought it for the good of his subjects to enter into a treaty of amity and commerce with the United States of America, who had established their independence, so justly merited, by their courage and constancy;" or to that effect. I imagine this treaty

will be soon completed; if any difficulty should arise, I shall take the advice of my colleagues.

I thank you for the copies of Mr. Paine's letter to the Abbé Raynal, which I have distributed into good hands. The errors we see in histories of our times and affairs weaken our faith in ancient history. M. Hilliard d'Auberteuil has here written another history of our revolution; which, however, he modestly calls an *Essay*, and, fearing that there may be errors, and wishing to have them corrected, that his second edition may be more perfect, he has brought me six sets, which he desires me to put into such hands in America, as may be good enough to render him and the public that service. I send them to you for that purpose, by Captain Barney, desiring that one set may be given to Mr. Paine, and the rest where you please. There is a quarto set in the parcel, which please to accept from me.

I have never learned whether the box of books I sent to you, and the press to Mr. Thomson, were put on board the *Eagle* or one of the transports. If the former, perhaps you might easily purchase them at New York; if the latter, you may still receive them among the goods for Congress, now shipping by Mr. Barclay. If they are quite lost, let me know it, that I may replace them.

I have received several letters from your office with bills to pay ministers' salaries. Nothing has yet been done with those bills, but I have paid Mr. Laurens twenty thousand livres.

I have this day signed a common letter to you drawn up by my colleagues, which you will receive herewith. We have kept this vessel longer for two things, a passport promised us from England, and a sum to send in her; but she is likely to depart with-

out both, being all of us impatient that Congress should receive early intelligence of our proceedings, and for the money we may probably borrow a frigate.

I am now entering on my seventy-eighth year; public business has engrossed fifty of them; I wish now to be, for the little time I have left, my own master. If I live to see this peace concluded, I shall beg leave to remind the Congress of their promise then to dismiss me. I shall be happy to sing with old Simeon, *Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Efforts used to procure a new Loan in France. — Dutch Loan. — Military Stores. — Settlement of Accounts.

Passy, 14 December, 1782.

SIR,

I received duly your several letters by Captain Barney, and the one of October 27th, since. I immediately made the application, so strongly pressed by the Congress, for a loan of four millions of dollars. I annexed to my memoir the resolves of Congress, with copies and extracts of your several letters, and those of Mr. Livingston upon the subject, all of which appeared to me extremely well written for enforcing the request. I was at last told, that it would be a difficult thing to furnish such a sum at present, but it would be considered. It was much wondered at, that no letters were brought by the *Washington* for Count de Vergennes, as several were come to the Secretary of War, M. de Ségur, and to the Marquis de Cas-

tries, Secretary of the Marine; and, the next time I waited on the minister, I was told that nothing could be done till the despatches from M. de la Luzerne were received.

I inquired of Captain Barney, who told me he believed M. de Forest had them, who left him to go to Paris by way of Nantz. M. de Forest was a week or ten days before he arrived at Paris, and he had not the despatches. After a fortnight had thus passed, I sent Captain Barney down to search for them in his ship. He there found them, and in about eight days more they arrived and were delivered. I have since continually pressed for a favorable answer. The Marquis de Lafayette has likewise been importunate; but we could only learn, that there was yet no decision. The negotiations for peace were going on, and I ascribed the delay partly to the uncertainty of the event, which might make a less sum sufficient, if it succeeded, or a greater necessary, if the war was still to be continued. I believe, too, that the new loan meditated for this government, but not ascertained, might cause some suspension. But, whatever are the causes, the fact is, that, though I understand we are to be aided, I am still ignorant what the quantum will be, or when it can be obtained. I have detained Captain Barney, hoping he might carry a part of it; but, seeing that so very uncertain, the Commissioners for the treaty here urge me to send him away with the preliminary articles, and take some other opportunity of sending money when we get it. Perhaps we can make use of the *Alliance*, which is now out upon a cruise.

Of the amount of Mr. Adams's loan in Holland, I have no certain account. He thinks it may be between fifteen and seventeen hundred thousand florins.

Mr. Grand obtained a part of it to pay the interest of the Dutch loan, which is done. But he will acquaint you better with the state of his funds, than I can do. He tells me he will re-state his accounts as you desire.

The shipping of the stores from Brest is wholly in the hands of Mr. Barclay. He will likewise take care of those, which are unloaded out of the three transports at Rochefort, that were to have gone with convoy in May last, and have ever since been detained there unaccountably, which I did not know till lately. The four Jamaica ships, brought in by the *Alliance*, will furnish him with money for paying charges. The accounts of goods brought to replace the *Fayette's* cargo having been sent you by several opportunities, I hope you have them before this time.

I am extremely glad to be freed from your money accounts, and the payment of bills; and I hope this will be the last application I shall be charged with to borrow. In a former letter I requested you to be attorney to receive and remit my salary, which I now repeat. The friends of the Duke de Lauzun, who is an officer in the French army, having occasion to send him some money, requested me to furnish bills. To oblige them I gave a draft on you for six thousand livres, which I request you would honor and deduct the same out of my salary. Methinks Mr. Grand should have some general order to defray the contingent expenses of your ministers. I am concerned, that the resolution of appointing a person to settle all our accounts in Europe has not yet been carried into execution. They certainly cannot be so well settled in America, and I shall think it hard, after I am out of place, to be detained here on their account for years, like poor unhappy Deane; who, by the way, is, I think,

in that respect, hardly dealt with. Settlement of accounts and payment of just balances are due even between enemies.

I know not where the Virginia stores lie. I will inquire and acquaint Mr. Barclay with your resolution concerning them, which I think very prudent.

Penet, who was employed by that State as an agent to borrow money here, is broke and absconded. His creditors are all worrying me with their complaints, who have nothing to do with his affairs. I have long since mentioned the inconvenience of the attempts of separate States to borrow money in Europe. They have hurt our credit, and produced nothing. We have put faith in every adventurer, who pretended to have influence here, and who, when he arrived, had none but what our appointment gave him.

I congratulate you on the tokens of approaching peace. I wish nothing may happen to prevent it. With sincere and great esteem, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 15 December, 1782.

SIR,

I have the honor to acquaint your Excellency, that our courier is to set out to-morrow at ten o'clock, with the despatches we send to Congress, by the *Washington*, Captain Barney, for which ship we have got a passport from the King of England. If you would make any use of this conveyance, the courier shall wait upon you to-morrow at Versailles, and receive your orders.

I hoped I might have been able to send part of the aids we have asked, by this safe vessel. I beg that

your Excellency would at least inform me what expectations I may give in my letters. I fear the Congress will be reduced to despair, when they find that nothing is yet obtained. With the greatest and most sincere respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Complains that the Preliminaries between the British Commissioners had been concluded without any Communication with the French Cabinet.

Translation.

Versailles, 15 December, 1782.

SIR,

I cannot but be surprised, that, after the explanation I have had with you, and the promise you gave, that you would not press the application for an English passport for the sailing of the packet *Washington*, you now inform me, that you have received the passport, and that at ten o'clock to-morrow morning your courier will set out to carry your despatches. I am at a loss, Sir, to explain your conduct, and that of your colleagues on this occasion. You have concluded your preliminary articles without any communication between us, although the instructions from Congress prescribe, that nothing shall be done without the participation of the King. You are about to hold out a certain hope of peace to America, without even informing yourself on the state of the negotiation on our part.

You are wise and discreet, Sir; you perfectly understand what is due to propriety; you have all your life performed your duties. I pray you to consider

how you propose to fulfil those, which are due to the King? I am not desirous of enlarging these reflections; I commit them to your own integrity. When you shall be pleased to relieve my uncertainty, I will entreat the King to enable me to answer your demands. I have the honor to be, Sir, with sincere regard, &c. DE VERGENNES.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

No Peace can take Place between England and America without the Concurrence of France.

Passy, 17 December, 1782.

SIR,

I received the letter your Excellency did me the honor of writing to me on the 15th instant. The proposal of having a passport from England was agreed to by me the more willingly, as I at that time had hopes of obtaining some money to send in the *Washington*, and the passport would have made its transportation safer, with that of our despatches, and of yours also, if you had thought fit to make use of the occasion. Your Excellency objected, as I understood it, that the English ministers, by their letters sent in the same ship, might convey inconvenient expectations into America. It was therefore I proposed not to press for the passport, till your preliminaries were also agreed to. They have sent the passport without being pressed to do it, and they have sent no letters to go under it, and ours will prevent the inconvenience apprehended. In a subsequent conversation, your Excellency mentioned your intention of sending some of the King's cutters, whence I imagined, that detaining the *Washington* was no longer necessary; and it was certainly

incumbent on us to give Congress as early an account as possible of our proceedings, who will think it extremely strange to hear of them by other means, without a line from us. I acquainted your Excellency, however, with our intention of despatching that ship, supposing you might possibly have something to send by her.

Nothing has been agreed in the preliminaries contrary to the interests of France; and no peace is to take place between us and England, till you have concluded yours. Your observation is, however, apparently just, that, in not consulting you before they were signed, we have been guilty of neglecting a point of *bienséance*. But, as this was not from want of respect for the King, whom we all love and honor, we hope it will be excused, and that the great work, which has hitherto been so happily conducted, is so nearly brought to perfection, and is so glorious to his reign, will not be ruined by a single indiscretion of ours. And certainly the whole edifice sinks to the ground immediately, if you refuse on that account to give us any further assistance.

We have not yet despatched the ship, and I beg leave to wait upon you on Friday for your answer.

It is not possible for any one to be more sensible than I am, of what I and every American owe to the King, for the many and great benefits and favors he has bestowed upon us. All my letters to America are proofs of this; all tending to make the same impressions on the minds of my countrymen, that I felt in my own. And I believe, that no Prince was ever more beloved and respected by his own subjects, than the King is by the people of the United States. *The English, I just now learn, flatter themselves they have already divided us.* I hope this little misunderstanding will therefore be kept a secret, and that they will

find themselves totally mistaken. With great and sincere respect, I am, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO M. DE LA LUZERNE.*

On the Signing of the Treaty of Peace by the English and American Commissioners without the Knowledge of the French Ministry.

Translation.

Versailles, 19 December, 1782.

SIR,

With this letter I have the honor to send you a translation of the preliminary articles, which the American Plenipotentiaries have agreed to and signed with those of Great Britain, to be made into a treaty when the terms of peace between France and England shall be settled.

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* M. de la Luzerne was at this time the French minister in the United States. As a historical document this letter is remarkable and important. Circumstances excited suspicions in the minds of the American Commissioners unfavorable to the French ministers, in regard to their designs in the treaty. These suspicions were fostered in various ways by the English Commissioners, whose policy and interest led them to produce as much alienation as they could between their allied opponents. Such was their influence to this end, combined with the circumstances alluded to, that the American Commissioners were induced to sign the treaty, without the knowledge of the French government, which was contrary to the positive instructions of Congress, and in violation of the most obvious rules of courtesy required by the terms of the alliance. This implied distrust of the fidelity and honorable motives of the French government, as may well be supposed, could not be viewed with indifference by that government. The above letter, communicating the first intelligence of the event by Count de Vergennes to the French minister in the United States, and being in the nature of a confidential despatch, must necessarily be considered as expressing the undisguised sentiments of the writer, and consequently of the French cabinet. Indeed, there is no fact in history, which is now more susceptible of complete demonstration, than that the suspicions of the American Commissioners on this occasion were utterly without any just foundation; that the

You will surely be gratified, as well as myself, with the very extensive advantages, which our allies, the Americans, are to receive from the peace; but you certainly will not be less surprised than I have been, at the conduct of the Commissioners. According to the instructions of Congress, they ought to have done nothing without our participation. I have informed you, that the King did not seek to influence the negotiation any further than his offices might be necessary to his friends. The American Commissioners will not say, that I have interfered, and much less that I have wearied them with my curiosity. They have cautiously kept themselves at a distance from me. Mr. Adams, one of them, coming from Holland, where he had been received and served by our ambassador, had been in Paris nearly three weeks, without imagining that he owed me any mark of attention, and probably I should not have seen him till this time, if I had not caused him to be reminded of it.* When-

French ministry, so far from interfering or meddling with the negotiation, kept wholly aloof from it; that they had no design whatever to secure advantages to themselves at the expense of the American claims; and that they were really gratified at the success of the Americans in procuring so good terms as they did. The direct proofs of these facts are abundant; whereas the suspicions of the Commissioners are sustained by no other evidence, than that of circumstances, inferences, conjectures, and deceptive appearances.

* When Mr. Adams mentioned this subject in a letter to Mr. Livingston, dated November 11th, 1782, he said, the Commissioners had been so constantly engaged with the treaty, that he "had not been out to Versailles nor anywhere else." He added; "On Saturday last, the Marquis de Lafayette called upon me, and told me he had been to Versailles, and that the Count de Vergennes had said to him, that he had been informed by the returns of the police, that I was in Paris, but not officially, and he should take it well if I would come and see him. I went out to dine with Dr. Franklin the same day, who had just returned from delivering his memorial, and repeated to me the same message. I said to both, I would go the next morning, and accordingly on Sunday the 9th I went to make my court to his Excellency." — See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. VI. p. 451.

ever I have had occasion to see any one of them, and inquire of them briefly respecting the progress of the negotiation, they have constantly clothed their speech in generalities, giving me to understand, that it did not go forward, and that they had no confidence in the sincerity of the British ministry.

Judge of my surprise, when, on the 30th of November, Dr. Franklin informed me that the articles were signed. The reservation retained on our account does not save the infraction of the promise, which we have mutually made, not to sign except conjointly. I owe Dr. Franklin the justice to state, however, that on the next day he sent me a copy of the articles. He will hardly complain, that I received them without demonstrations of sensibility. It was not till some days after, that, when this minister had come to see me, I allowed myself to make him perceive that his proceeding in this abrupt signature of the articles had little in it, which could be agreeable to the King. He appeared sensible of it, and excused, in the best manner he could, himself and his colleagues. Our conversation was amicable.

Dr. Franklin spoke to me of his desire to send these articles to the Congress, and said, that for this purpose he and his colleagues had agreed to an exchange of passports with the English minister, for the safety of the vessels which should be sent. I observed to him, that this form appeared to me dangerous; that, the articles being only provisional and dependent on the fate of our negotiation, which was then very uncertain, I feared this appearance of an intelligence with England, in connexion with the signature of the articles, might make the people in America think a peace was consummated, and embarrass Congress, of whose fidelity I had no suspicion. I added many other reasons,

the force of which Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Laurens who accompanied him, seemed to acknowledge. They spared nothing to convince me of the confidence, which we ought to have in the fidelity of the United States, and they left me with the assurance, that they should conform to my wishes.

You may imagine my astonishment, therefore, when, on the evening of the 15th, I received from Dr. Franklin the letter, a copy of which is herewith enclosed. The tone of this letter seemed to me so singular, that I thought it my duty to write the answer, which I likewise send to you. I am ignorant of the effect, which this answer may have produced. I have not since heard from the American Commissioners. The courier has not come for my despatches, and I know not whether he has in reality been sent off. It would be singular, after the intimation which I have given them, if they should not have the curiosity to acquaint themselves with the state of our negotiation, that they may communicate the intelligence to Congress. This negotiation is not yet so far advanced in regard to ourselves, as that of the United States; not that the King, if he had shown as little delicacy in his proceedings as the American Commissioners, might not have signed articles with England long before them. There is no essential difficulty at present between France and England; but the King has been resolved that all his allies should be satisfied, being determined to continue the war, whatever advantage may be offered to him, if England is disposed to wrong any one of them.

We have now only to attend to the interests of Spain and Holland. I have reason to hope, that the former will be soon arranged. The fundamental points are established, and little remains but to settle the

forms. I think the United States will do well to make an arrangement with Spain. They will be neighbours. As to Holland, I fear her affairs will cause embarrassments and delays. The disposition of the British ministry towards that republic appears to be any thing but favorable.

Such is the present state of things. I trust it will soon be better; but, whatever may be the result, I think it proper that the most influential members of Congress should be informed of the very irregular conduct of their Commissioners in regard to us. You may speak of it not in the tone of complaint. I accuse no person; I blame no one, not even Dr. Franklin. He has yielded too easily to the bias of his colleagues, who do not pretend to recognise the rules of courtesy in regard to us. All their attentions have been taken up by the English, whom they have met in Paris. If we may judge of the future from what has passed here under our eyes, we shall be but poorly paid for all that we have done for the United States, and for securing to them a national existence.

I will add nothing, in respect to the demand for money, which has been made upon us. You may well judge, if conduct like this encourages us to make demonstrations of our liberality.* I am, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

* Notwithstanding this intimation, and the cause of it, the King of France had already resolved to grant to the United States a new loan, and his purpose was not changed by the conduct of the Commissioners. Two days after the date of the above letter, Count de Vergennes wrote as follows to M. de la Luzerne. "You are acquainted with the demands of Congress on the King, for additional pecuniary aids. Twenty millions of livres have been requested. This sum greatly exceeds the proportion of our means, which can be employed for that object; nevertheless, his Majesty, desiring to afford the United States a new proof of his friendship, and of the interest he takes in their affairs, has decided on granting to them a loan of six millions of livres for the year 1783, part

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Remits a Part of the new Loan. — Result of the Treaty uncertain. — Discouraging Intelligence of the Backwardness in America to raise Funds by Taxation.

Passy, 23 December, 1782.

SIR,

When I wrote to you on the 14th, I expected to have despatched the *Washington* immediately, though without any money. A little misunderstanding prevented it. That was, after some time, got over, and on Friday last an order was given to furnish me with

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of which, that is, six hundred thousand livres, will be immediately paid into the hands of Dr. Franklin, to be forwarded to Mr. Morris. I cannot dissemble from you, that this effort presses very heavily upon us, after a five years' war, the expenses of which have been and still continue to be enormous." — *December 21st. MS. Letter.*

Three days later Count de Vergennes wrote again to M. de la Luzerne. "As Dr. Franklin persists in his desire of despatching a courier to inform Congress of his transactions with England, I do not think it proper to endeavour to detain him longer, although I should be extremely sorry to have peace encouraged in America, before its certainty is established. Our negotiation with England remains unfinished and in doubt, and I cannot say when or how it will terminate. It is therefore exceedingly important, that you should make known to the members of Congress the exact state of things, that they may not be deceived with a false hope of peace, and thus make demonstrations, that may excite suspicions of a defection from the purpose they have adhered to, which I believe entirely opposed to the principles and intentions of that body The King has done too much for the United States, and shown too many proofs of his constant friendship, to leave any possible room to doubt, that his Majesty sincerely desires to procure for them the enjoyment of peace as speedily as it can be done. It is a benefit, in the advantages of which he will equally participate with them, and which he is extremely desirous of procuring for his people; but his will alone is not sufficient; the concurrence of that of England is necessary; and she, although at least in appearances wishing for peace, causes difficulties to spring up, which may retard it, if indeed they do not in the end defeat it altogether. As soon as the negotiation takes a decided turn, I shall give you notice by the most expeditious conveyance. Probably the negotiation would proceed with fewer embarrassments, if the American

six hundred thousand livres immediately, to send in that ship; and I was answered by the Count de Vergennes, that the rest of the six millions should be paid us quarterly in the course of the year 1783. If your drafts make it necessary, I believe we can have it advanced, at least on paying discount. Mr. Grand has been ever since busy collecting the proper species to send it in, and it will go, I suppose, to-morrow or next day. I am glad to make use of this opportunity, and wish the sum could have been larger, as we

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Commissioners had reflected on the consequences, and been less precipitate in signing their provisional articles."—*December 24th. MS. Letter.*

The instructions from Congress to the American Commissioners, respecting their coöperation with the French ministry in negotiating the treaty, were of the following purport.

"You are to make the most candid and confidential communications upon all subjects to the ministers of our generous ally, the King of France; to undertake nothing in the negotiations for peace, or truce, without their knowledge and concurrence; and ultimately to govern yourselves by their advice and opinion, endeavouring in your whole conduct to make them sensible, how much we rely upon his Majesty's influence for effectual aid in every thing that may be necessary to the peace, security, and future prosperity of the United States of America."

The violation of the instructions by the American Commissioners, in concluding and signing their treaty without the concurrence of the French government, is the more unjustifiable, on account of the fidelity with which the French ministers adhered to the spirit of those instructions, with reference to the United States, in negotiating their treaty with England. This subject is treated in Wilmot's "Historical View of the Commission for inquiring into the Losses, Services, and Claims of the American Loyalists." Speaking of the efforts made in favor of the Loyalists at the time of negotiating the treaty, he says;

"The writer of these sheets, who has seen the correspondence between the government at home, and those who were employed to negotiate this important business at Paris, can assert with confidence, that the utmost possible pains were repeatedly taken to procure more substantial terms for the Loyalists; that the treaty was on the point of being broken off on this account alone; that the fourth, fifth, and sixth articles of the treaty were obtained and almost extorted with the greatest difficulty; *that the court of Versailles absolutely refused to come to any treaty or decision at all, till the American Commissioners were completely satisfied.*"—p. 37.

have got a passport from England for the ship *Washington*, Captain Barney, signed by the King's own hand, the more curious, as it acknowledges us by our title of the *United States of America*.

We should not, however, imagine ourselves already in peace. The other powers are not yet agreed, and war may still continue longer than we expect. Our preliminaries have not yet been communicated to Parliament, and I apprehend there will be great clamors against them when they appear. Hints are already thrown out, that the King has gone beyond his powers; and, if the new ministry do not stand their ground, perhaps the ratification may be prevented. A little more success in the West Indies this winter may totally turn the heads of that giddy nation.

I pressed hard, therefore, for the whole sum demanded, but was told it was impossible, the great efforts to be made this campaign in the East and West Indies (the armies for which are now afloat), and the enormous expense engaged in, having much embarrassed the finances.

Our people certainly ought to do more for themselves. It is absurd, the pretending to be lovers of liberty while they grudge paying for the defence of it. It is said here, that an impost of five per cent on all goods imported, though a most reasonable proposition, had not been agreed to by all the States, and was therefore frustrated; and that your newspapers acquaint the world with this, with the non-payment of taxes by the people, and with the non-payment of interest to the creditors of the public. The knowledge of these things has hurt our credit, and the loan in Holland, and would prevent our getting any thing here but from the government. The foundation of credit abroad should be laid at home, and certain funds should be prepared

and established beforehand, for the regular payment at least of the interest. With sincere esteem and respect, I am, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

The Swedish Ambassador exchanges full Powers with Dr. Franklin.

Passy, 24 December, 1782.

SIR,

Sundry circumstances, occurring since mine of the 5th and 14th, have hitherto retarded the departure of our despatches. They will now go under the security of a British passport, be accompanied by a sum of money, and by some further intelligence from England, which shows the still unsettled state of minds there, and, together with the difficulties and small progress in the Dutch and Spanish negotiations, makes the speedy conclusion of peace still uncertain.

The Swedish ambassador has exchanged full powers with me. I send a copy of his herewith. We have had some conferences on the proposed plan of our treaty, and he has despatched a courier for further instructions respecting some of the articles.

The Commissioners have joined in a letter to you, recommending the consideration of a proposal from Mr. Bridgen, relating to copper coin. With this you have a copy of that proposal, and a sample of the copper. If it should be accepted, I conceive the weight and value of the pieces (charge of coinage deducted) should be such that they should be aliquot parts of a Spanish dollar. By the copy enclosed, of an old letter of mine to Mr. Brigden, you will see the ideas I had of the additional utility such a coinage might be of in communicating instruction.*

* See this letter in Vol. VIII. p. 383.

December 25th. Enclosed is a copy of a letter just received from Count de Vergennes, upon the present state of the negotiation with England. With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

Planting Trees in Philadelphia. — Newspaper Abuse.

Passy, 24 December, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your ingenious paper in favor of the trees. I own I now wish we had two rows of them in every one of our streets. The comfortable shelter they would afford us, when walking, from our burning summer suns, and the greater coolness of our walls and pavements, would, I conceive, in the improved health of the inhabitants, amply compensate the loss of a house now and then by fire, if such should be the consequence. But a tree is soon felled; and, as axes are at hand in every neighbourhood, may be down before the engines arrive.

You do well to avoid being concerned in the pieces of personal abuse, so scandalously common in our newspapers, that I am afraid to lend any of them here, until I have examined and laid aside such as would disgrace us, and subject us among strangers to a reflection like that used by a gentleman in a coffee-house to two quarrellers, who, after a mutually free use of the words, *rogue, villain, rascal, scoundrel,* &c., seemed as if they would refer their dispute to him; "I know nothing of you, or your affairs," said he; "I only perceive *that you know one another.*"

The conductor of a newspaper should, methinks, consider himself as in some degree the guardian of

his country's reputation, and refuse to insert such writings as may hurt it. If people will print their abuses of one another, let them do it in little pamphlets, and distribute them where they think proper. It is absurd to trouble all the world with them; and unjust to subscribers in distant places, to stuff their paper with matters so unprofitable and so disagreeable. With sincere esteem and affection, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 25 December, 1782.

SIR,

I have the honor to send you my despatches for the Chevalier de la Luzerne. The packet is voluminous, but it contains many duplicates.

I should be glad if it were in my power to inform him, that our treaty is in as good progress as yours, but this is far from being the case. I cannot even foresee what will be the issue, for difficulties multiply. It will be well for you to forewarn the Congress to be prepared for whatever event may arise. I do not despair; I rather hope; but as yet all is uncertainty. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

DE VERGENNES.

TO SAMUEL COOPER.

Preliminaries of a Treaty. — Importance of the Alliance with France.

Passy, 26 December, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

We have taken some good steps here towards a peace. Our independence is acknowledged; our boun-

daries as good and extensive as we demanded; and our fishery more so than the Congress expected. I hope the whole preliminaries will be approved, and with the definitive treaty, when made, give entire satisfaction to our country. But there are so many interests to be considered between five nations, and so many claims to adjust, that I can hardly flatter myself to see the peace soon concluded, though I wish and pray for it, and use my best endeavours to promote it.

I am extremely sorry to hear language from Americans on this side the water, and to hear of such language from your side, as tends to hurt the good understanding that has hitherto so happily subsisted between this court and ours. There seems to be a party with you that wish to destroy it. If they could succeed, they would do us irreparable injury. It is our firm connexion with France, that gives us weight with England, and respect throughout Europe. If we were to break our faith with this nation, *on whatever pretence*, England would again trample on us, and every other nation despise us. We cannot, therefore, be too much on our guard, how we permit the *private resentments* of particular persons to enter into our public counsels. You will hear much of an intercepted letter communicated to us by the British ministry.*

* Alluding to a letter written in Philadelphia by M. de Marbois to the French ministry. It was intercepted on its passage and sent to England, where it was deciphered and forwarded to the American Commissioners, during the negotiation of the treaty. See this letter, as deciphered and translated, in Pitkin's *History of the United States*, Vol. II. p. 528.

Count de Vergennes, in writing some time afterwards to M. de la Luzerne, the French minister in America, said; "An intercepted letter from M. de Marbois was communicated to the American Commissioners by the British ministry, which, by a forced interpretation, was designed to render us suspected in regard to the fisheries. In the first place, the opinion of M. de Marbois is not necessarily that of the King;

The channel ought to be suspected. It may have received additions and alterations; but, supposing it all genuine, the forward, mistaken zeal of a secretary of legation should not be imputed to the King, who has in so many ways proved himself our faithful and firm friend and ally.

In my opinion, the true political interest of America consists in observing and fulfilling, with the greatest exactitude, the engagements of our alliance with France, and behaving at the same time towards England, so as not entirely to extinguish her hopes of a reconciliation.

I long to see you and my country once more before I die, being ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Enclosing Resolutions of Congress. — Departure of the French Fleet. — Financial Distresses of the United States.

Philadelphia, 2 January, 1783.

SIR,

I was honored with your letters by the *Danae.* I congratulate you upon the promising state of our negotiations, since peace begins to be no less desirable here than elsewhere.

But I will not enter into that subject at present, as I mean to write very fully both to Mr. Jay and you by Mr. Jefferson, who will sail in company with this frigate in the *Romulus*, a ship of forty-four guns. Lest,

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and, in the next place, the views indicated in that despatch have not been followed." — *Versailles, September 7th*, 1783. *MS. Letter.*

however, any accident should happen to prevent his arriving so soon as the *Emerald*, I enclose a resolution of Congress, which was suggested by the proposition you mention to have been made to Mr. Oswald, on the subject of commerce. For my own part, I presume that it is already included in your propositions, but, as we have yet been favored only with that short note of them, which has been transmitted by you, we can form no accurate judgment on the subject. You can hardly conceive the embarrassments, that the want of more minute details subjects us to.

You will learn from the Count de Rochambeau, that the French army sailed the 24th ultimo. Perhaps it were to be wished that they had remained here, at least till New York and Charleston were evacuated, or rather till the peace. Congress have, however, given them a good word at parting, as you will see by the enclosed resolves. Not being consulted, they could interpose no objections to their departure, though they were not without many reasons for wishing to detain them.

Our finances are still in great distress. If the war continues, a foreign loan in addition to those already received will be essential. A plan for ascertaining what shall be called contingent expenses is under the consideration of Congress, as well as the objections you have stated with respect to the mode of paying your salaries, which will, I believe, be altered. The allowance to Mr. Franklin has been confirmed, and your moderation and his upon this point have done you both honor in the opinion of Congress. I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO RICHARD OSWALD.

Enclosing Propositions to abolish Privateering.

Passy, 14 January, 1783.

SIR,

I am much obliged by your information of your intended trip to England. I heartily wish you a good journey and a speedy return, and request your kind care of a packet for Mr. Hodgson.

I enclose two papers, that were read at different times by me to the Commissioners; they may serve to show, if you should have occasion, what was urged on the part of America on certain points; or may help to refresh your memory. I send you also another paper, which I once read to you separately. It contains a proposition for improving the law of nations, by prohibiting the plundering of unarmed and usefully employed people. I rather wish than expect, that it will be adopted. But I think it may be offered with a better grace by a country, that is likely to suffer least and gain most by continuing the ancient practice; which is our case, as the American ships, laden only with the gross productions of the earth, cannot be so valuable as yours, filled with sugars or with manufactures. It has not yet been considered by my colleagues, but if you should think or find that it might be acceptable on your side, I would try to get it inserted in the general treaty. I think it will do honor to the nations that establish it.

With great and sincere esteem, I am, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

*Propositions relative to Privateering, communicated to Mr. Oswald.**

It is for the interest of humanity in general, that the occasions of war, and the inducements to it, should be diminished.

If rapine is abolished, one of the encouragements to war is taken away, and peace therefore more likely to continue and be lasting.

The practice of robbing merchants on the high seas, a remnant of the ancient piracy, though it may be accidentally beneficial to particular persons, is far from being profitable to all engaged in it, or to the nation that authorizes it. In the beginning of a war, some rich ships, not upon their guard, are surprised and taken. This encourages the first adventurers to fit out more armed vessels, and many others to do the same. But the enemy at the same time become more careful, arm their merchant ships better, and render them not so easy to be taken; they go also more under protection of convoys; thus, while the privateers to take them are multiplied, the vessels subject to be taken, and the chances of profit, are diminished, so that many cruises are made, wherein the expenses overgo the gains; and, as is the case in other lotteries, though particulars have got prizes, the mass of adventurers are losers, the whole expense of fitting out all the privateers, during a war, being much greater than the whole amount of goods taken. Then there is the national loss of all the labor of so many men during the time they have been employed in robbing; who, besides, spend what they get in riot, drunken-

* These propositions are the same in substance as the author's two papers entitled, *A Thought concerning the Sugar Islands*, and *Observations on War*. See Vol. II. pp. 419, 487.

ness, and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after a peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and housebreakers. Even the undertakers, who have been fortunate, are by sudden wealth led into expensive living, the habit of which continues when the means of supporting it ceases, and finally ruins them; a just punishment for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest, innocent traders and their families, whose subsistence was employed in serving the common interests of mankind.

Should it be agreed and become a part of the law of nations, that the cultivators of the earth are not to be molested or interrupted in their peaceable and useful employment, the inhabitants of the sugar islands would perhaps come under the protection of such a regulation, which would be a great advantage to the nations who at present hold those islands, since the cost of sugar to the consumer in those nations consists not merely in the price he pays for it by the pound, but in the accumulated charge of all the taxes he pays in every war, to fit out fleets and maintain troops for the defence of the islands that raise the sugar, and the ships that bring it home. But the expense of treasure is not all. A celebrated philosophical writer remarks, that, when he considered the wars made in Africa, for prisoners to raise sugars in America, the numbers slain in those wars, the numbers that, being crowded in ships, perish in the transportation, and the numbers that die under the severities of slavery, he could scarce look on a morsel of sugar without conceiving it spotted with human blood. If he had considered also the blood of one another, which the white nations shed in fighting for those islands, he would have imagined his sugar not as spotted only,

but as thoroughly dyed red. On these accounts I am persuaded, that the subjects of the Emperor of Germany, and the Empress of Russia, who have no sugar islands, consume sugar cheaper at Vienna, and Moscow, with all the charge of transporting it after its arrival in Europe, than the citizens of London or of Paris. And I sincerely believe, that if France and England were to decide, by throwing dice, which should have the whole of their sugar islands, the loser in the throw would be the gainer. The future expense of defending them would be saved; the sugars would be bought cheaper by all Europe, if the inhabitants might make it without interruption, and, whoever imported the sugar, the same revenue might be raised by duties at the customhouses of the nation that consumed it. And, on the whole, I conceive it would be better for the nations now possessing sugar colonies to give up their claim to them, let them govern themselves, and put them under the protection of all the powers of Europe as neutral countries, open to the commerce of all, the profits of the present monopolies being by no means equivalent to the expense of maintaining them.

Article.

If war should hereafter arise between Great Britain and the United States, which God forbid, the merchants of either country then residing in the other shall be allowed to remain nine months to collect their debts, and settle their affairs, and may depart freely, carrying off all their effects without molestation or hindrance. And all fishermen, all cultivators of the earth, and all artisans or manufacturers unarmed, and inhabiting unfortified towns, villages, or places, who labor for the common subsistence and benefit of mankind, and

peaceably follow their respective employments, shall be allowed to continue the same, and shall not be molested by the armed force of the enemy in whose power by the events of the war they may happen to fall; but, if any thing is necessary to be taken from them, for the use of such armed force, the same shall be paid for at a reasonable price. And all merchants or traders with their unarmed vessels, employed in commerce, exchanging the products of different places, and thereby rendering the necessaries, conveniences, and comforts of human life more easy to obtain, and more general, shall be allowed to pass freely, unmolested. And neither of the powers, parties to this treaty, shall grant or issue any commission to any private armed vessels, empowering them to take or destroy such trading ships, or interrupt such commerce.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 18 January, 1783.

Sir,

It is essential that I should have the honor of conferring with you, Mr. Adams, and your other colleagues, who are in Paris. I therefore pray you to invite these gentlemen to come out to Versailles with you on Monday, before ten o'clock in the morning. It will be well, also, if you will bring your grandson. It will be necessary for much writing and translating from English into French to be done. The object for which I ask this interview is very interesting to the United States. I have the honor to be, Sir,

De Vergennes.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 18 January 1783.

SIR,

Agreeably to the notice just received from your Excellency, I shall acquaint Mr. Adams with your desire to see us on Monday before ten o'clock, at Versailles; and we shall endeavour to be punctual. My other colleagues are absent; Mr. Laurens being gone to Bath, in England, to recover his health, and Mr. Jay into Normandy. I shall bring my grandson, as you direct. With great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 18 January, 1783.

MY DEAREST SIR,

I cannot but in the most earnest manner, and from recent circumstances, press your going early to Versailles to-morrow; and I have considerable reason to think, that your appearance there will not displease the person whom you address. I am of opinion, that it is very likely that you will have the glory of having concluded the peace by this visit; at least I am sure, if the deliberations of to-morrow evening end unfavorably, that there is the strongest appearance of war; if they end favorably, perhaps little difficulty may attend the rest.

After all, the peace will have as much that is conceded in it, as England can in any shape be made just now to relish, owing to the stubborn demands, principally of Spain, who would not, I believe, upon any motive recede from her conquests. What I wrote about Gibraltar arrived after the subject, as I under-

stand, was canvassed, and when it of course must have appeared impolitic eagerly and immediately to revive it.

You reproved me, or rather reproved a political scheme, yesterday, of which I have heard more said favorably by your friends at Paris, than by any persons whatever in London. But do you, my dear Sir, make this peace, and trust our common sense respecting another war. England, said a man of sense to me the other day, will come out of the war like a convalescent out of disease, and must be reëstablished by some physic and much regimen. I cannot easily tell in what shape a bankruptcy would come upon England, and still less easily in what mode and degree it would affect us; but, if your confederacy mean to bankrupt us now, I am sure we shall lose the great fear, that would deter us from another war. Your allies, therefore, for policy and for humanity's sake, will, I hope, stop short of this extremity; especially as we should do some mischief to others, as well as to ourselves. I am, my dearest Sir, your devoted, ever affectionate, and ever obliged

B. VAUGHAN.

TO JOHN ADAMS.

Passy, 19 January, 1783.

SIR,

Late last night I received a note from Count de Vergennes, acquainting me that it is very essential he should have a conference with us, and requesting that I would inform my colleagues. He desires that we may be with him before ten on Monday morning. If it will suit you to call here, we may go together in my carriage. We should be on the road by eight o'clock. With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Preliminaries signed between France, Spain, and England.

Passy 21 January, 1783.

SIR,

I have just received your letters of November 9th and December 3d.* This is to inform you, and to request you to inform the Congress, that the preliminaries of peace between France, Spain, and England, were yesterday signed, and a cessation of arms agreed to by the ministers of those powers, and by us in behalf of the United States, of which act, so far as relates to us, I enclose a copy. I have not yet obtained a copy of the preliminaries agreed to by the three crowns, but hear, in general, that they are very advantageous to France and Spain. I shall be able, in a day or two, to write more fully and perfectly. Holland was not ready to sign preliminaries, but their principal points are settled. Mr. Laurens is absent at Bath, and Mr. Jay in Normandy, for their healths, but will both be here to assist in forming the definitive treaty. I congratulate you and our country on the happy prospects afforded us by the finishing so speedily this glorious revolution, and am, with great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM JOHN JAY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Paris, 26 January, 1783.

SIR,

It having been suspected, that I concurred in the appointment of your grandson to the place of secre-

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* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV. pp. 31, 45.

tary to the American commission for peace *at your instance*, I think it right, thus unsolicited, to put it in your power to correct the mistake.

Your general character, the opinion I had long entertained of your services to our country, and the friendly attention and aid with which you had constantly favored me after my arrival in Spain, impressed me with a desire of manifesting both my esteem and attachment by stronger evidence than professions. That desire extended my regard for you to your grandson. He was then indeed a stranger to me, but the terms, in which you expressed to Congress your opinion of his being qualified for another place of equal importance, were so full and satisfactory, as to leave me no room to doubt of his being qualified for the one above mentioned. I was, therefore, happy to assure you, in one of the first letters I afterwards wrote you from Spain, that, in case a secretary to our commission for peace should become necessary, and the appointment be left to us, I should take that opportunity of evincing my regard for you, by nominating him, or words to that effect. What I then wrote was the spontaneous suggestion of my own mind, unsolicited, and I believe, unexpected by you.

When I came here on the business of that commission, I brought with me the same intentions, and should always have considered myself engaged by honor, as well as inclination, to fulfil them, unless I had found myself mistaken in the opinion I had imbibed of that young gentleman's character and qualifications; but, that not being the case, I found myself at liberty to indulge my wishes, and be as good as my word. For I expressly declare, that your grandson is, in my opinion, qualified for the place in question, and that, if he had not been, no consideration would have prevailed upon me to propose, or join in, his appointment.

This explicit and unreserved statement of facts is due to you, to him, and to justice, and you have my consent to make any use of it that you may think proper. I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect,

JOHN JAY.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

On the Death of several Friends. — Declines visiting England. — Peace. — Requests her to visit Paris.

Passy, 27 January, 1783.

— The departure of my dearest friend,* which I learn from your last letter, greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this life was one of the principal motives of my proposing to visit England again, before my return to America. The last year carried off my friends Dr. Pringle, Dr. Fothergill, Lord Kames, and Lord le Despencer. This has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the ties I had to that country, and indeed to the world in general, are loosened one by one, and I shall soon have no attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

I intended writing when I sent the eleven books, but I lost the time in looking for the twelfth. I wrote with that; and hope it came to hand. I therein asked your counsel about my coming to England. On reflection, I think I can, from my knowledge of your prudence, foresee what it will be, viz. not to come too soon, lest it should seem braving and insulting some who ought to be respected. I shall, therefore, omit that journey till I am near going to America, and then just step over to take leave of my friends, and spend

* Mrs. Stevenson, the mother of Mrs. Hewson.

a few days with you. I purpose bringing Ben with me, and perhaps may leave him under your care.

At length we are in peace, God be praised, and long, very long, may it continue. All wars are follies, very expensive, and very mischievous ones. When will mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their differences by arbitration? Were they to do it, even by the cast of a die, it would be better than by fighting and destroying each other.

Spring is coming on, when travelling will be delightful. Can you not, when you see your children all at school, make a little party, and take a trip hither? I have now a large house, delightfully situated, in which I could accommodate you and two or three friends, and I am but half an hour's drive from Paris.

In looking forward, twenty-five years seem a long period, but, in looking back, how short! Could you imagine, that it is now full a quarter of a century since we were first acquainted? It was in 1757. During the greatest part of the time, I lived in the same house with my dear deceased friend, your mother; of course you and I conversed with each other much and often. It is to all our honors, that in all that time we never had among us the smallest misunderstanding. Our friendship has been all clear sunshine, without the least cloud in its hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you, what I have had too frequent occasions to say to my other remaining old friends, "The fewer we become, the more let us love one another." Adieu, and believe me ever yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JOHN SARGENT.

Passy, 27 January, 1783.

My dear Friend,

I received and read the letter you were so kind as to write to me the 3d instant, with a great deal of pleasure, as it informed me of the welfare of a family, whom I have so long esteemed and loved, and to whom I am under so many obligations, which I shall ever remember. Our correspondence has been interrupted by that abominable war. I neither expected letters from you, nor would I hazard putting you in danger by writing any to you. We can now communicate freely; and next to the happiness of seeing and embracing you all again at Halstead, will be that of hearing frequently of your health and prosperity.

Mrs. Sargent and the good lady, her mother, are very kind in wishing me more happy years. I ought to be satisfied with those Providence has already been pleased to afford me, being now in my seventy-eighth; a long life to pass without any uncommon misfortune, the greater part of it in health and vigor of mind and body, near fifty years of it in continued possession of the confidence of my country, in public employments, and enjoying the esteem and affectionate, friendly regard of many wise and good men and women, in every country where I have resided. For these mercies and blessings I desire to be thankful to God, whose protection I have hitherto had, and I hope for its continuance to the end, which now cannot be far distant.

The account you give me of your family is pleasing, except that your eldest son continues so long unmarried. I hope he does not intend to live and die in celibacy. The wheel of life, that has rolled down to him from Adam without interruption, should not stop

with him. I would not have one dead, unbearing branch in the genealogical tree of the Sargents. The married state is, after all our jokes, the happiest, being conformable to our natures. Man and woman have each of them qualities and tempers, in which the other is deficient, and which in union contribute to the common felicity. Single and separate, they are not the complete human being; they are like the odd halves of scissars; they cannot answer the end of their formation.

I am concerned at the losses you have suffered by the war. You are still young and active enough to retrieve them, and peace, I hope, will afford the opportunity.

You mention nothing of my good friend Mrs. Deane, or her amiable sisters, whom I sometimes saw with you, nor of Mr. Chambers. I hope they are all well and happy. Present my respects to Mrs. Sargent, whom I love very much, and believe me ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Urging various Reasons to induce Dr. Franklin to continue the Memoirs of his Life.

Paris, 31 January, 1783.

MY DEAREST SIR,

When I had read over your sheets of minutes of the principal incidents of your life, recovered for you by your Quaker acquaintance,* I told you I would send you a letter expressing my reasons why I thought it would be useful to complete and publish it as he

* Dr. Franklin had put into Mr. Vaughan's hands the following extract from a letter, written by Mr. Abel James, a Quaker gentleman

desired. Various concerns have for some time past prevented this letter from being written, and I do not know whether it was worth any expectation. Happening to be at leisure however at present, I shall by writing at least interest and instruct myself; but, as the terms I am inclined to use may tend to offend a person of your manners, I shall only tell you how I would address any other person, who was as good and as great as yourself, but less diffident. I would say to him;

"Sir I *solicit* the history of your life from the following motives.

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of Philadelphia. A long and intimate friendship had existed between Dr. Franklin and Mr. James.

"My dear and honored Friend,

"I have often been desirous of writing to thee, but could not be reconciled to the thought that the letter might fall into the hands of the British, lest some printer or busybody should publish some part of the contents, and give our friend pain, and myself censure.

"Some time since there fell into my hands, to my great joy, about twenty-three sheets in thy own handwriting, containing an account of the parentage and life of thyself, directed to thy son, ending in the year 1730, with which there were notes, likewise in thy writing; a copy of which I enclose, in hopes it may be a means, if thou continued it up to a later period, that the first and latter part may be put together; and, if it is not yet continued, I hope thee will not delay it. Life is uncertain, as the Preacher tells us; and what will the world say, if kind, humane, and benevolent Benjamin Franklin should leave his friends and the world deprived of so pleasing and profitable a work; a work which would be useful and entertaining not only to a few, but to millions. The influence writings under that class have on the minds of youth is very great, and has nowhere appeared to me so plain, as in our friend's journal. It almost insensibly leads the youth into the resolution of endeavouring to become as good and eminent as the journalist. Should thine, for instance, when published, (and I think it could not fail of it,) lead the youth to equal the industry and temperance of thy early youth, what a blessing with that class would such a work be! I know of no character living, nor many of them put together, who has so much in his power as thyself to promote a greater spirit of industry and early attention to business, frugality, and temperance with the American youth. Not that I think the work would have no other merit and use in the world; far from it; but the first is of such vast importance, that I know nothing that can equal it."

"Your history is so remarkable, that if you do not give it, somebody else will certainly give it; and perhaps so as nearly to do as much harm, as your own management of the thing might do good.

"It will moreover present a table of the internal circumstances of your country, which will very much tend to invite to it settlers of virtuous and manly minds. And, considering the eagerness with which such information is sought by them, and the extent of your reputation, I do not know of a more efficacious advertisement than your biography would give.

"All that has happened to you is also connected with the detail of the manners and situation of a *rising* people; and in this respect I do not think that the writings of Cæsar and Tacitus can be more interesting to a true judge of human nature and society.

"But these, Sir, are small reasons in my opinion, compared with the chance which your Life will give for the forming of future great men; and, in conjunction with your *Art of Virtue* (which you design to publish), for improving the features of private character, and consequently for aiding all happiness, both public and domestic.

"The two works I allude to, Sir, will in particular give a noble rule and example of *self-education.* School and other education constantly proceeds upon false principles, and shows a clumsy apparatus pointed at a false mark; but your apparatus is simple, and the mark a true one; and, while parents and young persons are left destitute of other just means of estimating and becoming prepared for a reasonable course in life, your discovery, that the thing is in many a man's private power, will be invaluable!

"Influence upon the private character late in life is not only an influence late in life, but a weak influ-

ence. It is in *youth* that we plant our chief habits and prejudices; it is in youth that we take our party, as to profession, pursuits, and matrimony. In youth, therefore, the turn is given; in youth the education even of the next generation is given; in youth the private and public character is determined; and, the term of life extending but from youth to age, life ought to begin well from youth; and more especially *before* we take our party as to our principal objects.

"But your biography will not merely teach self-education, but the education of *a wise man;* and the wisest man will receive lights, and improve his progress, by seeing detailed the conduct of another wise man. And why are weaker men to be deprived of such helps, when we see our race has been blundering on in the dark, almost without a guide in this particular, from the farthest trace of time? Show then, Sir, how much is to be done, *both to sons and fathers;* and invite all wise men to become like yourself, and other men to become wise.

"When we see how cruel statesmen and warriors can be to the human race, and how absurd distinguished men can be to their acquaintance, it will be instructive to observe the instances multiply of pacific, acquiescing manners; and to find how compatible it is to be great and *domestic*, enviable and yet *good-humored.*

"The little private incidents, which you will also have to relate, will have considerable use, as we want, above all things, *rules of prudence in ordinary affairs;* and it will be curious to see how you have acted in these. It will be so far a sort of key to life, and explain many things that all men ought to have once explained to them, to give them a chance of becoming wise by foresight.

"The nearest thing to having experience of one's own, is to have other people's affairs brought before us in a shape that is interesting; this is sure to happen from your pen. Your affairs and management will have an air of simplicity or importance, that will not fail to strike; and I am convinced you have conducted them with as much originality, as if you had been conducting discussions in politics or philosophy; and what more worthy of experiments and system, its importance and its errors considered, than human life!

"Some men have been virtuous blindly, others have speculated fantastically, and others have been shrewd to bad purposes; but you, Sir, I am sure, will give under your hand, nothing but what is at the same moment wise, practical, and good.

"Your account of yourself (for I suppose the parallel I am drawing for Dr. Franklin will hold, not only in point of character, but of private history,) will show that you are ashamed of no origin; a thing the more important, as you prove how little necessary all origin is to happiness, virtue, or greatness.

"As no end likewise happens without a means, so we shall find, Sir, that even you yourself framed a plan by which you became considerable; but at the same time we may see, that, though the event is flattering, the means are as simple as wisdom could make them; that is, depending upon nature, virtue, thought, and habit.

"Another thing demonstrated will be the propriety of every man's waiting for his time for appearing upon the stage of the world. Our sensations being very much fixed to the moment, we are apt to forget that more moments are to follow the first, and consequently that man should arrange his conduct so as to suit the *whole* of a life. Your attention appears to have

been applied to your *life*, and the passing moments of it have been enlivened with content and enjoyment, instead of being tormented with foolish impatience or regrets. Such a conduct is easy for those, who make virtue and themselves their standard, and who try to keep themselves in countenance by examples of other truly great men, of whom patience is so often the characteristic.

"Your Quaker correspondent, Sir, (for here again I will suppose the subject of my letter resembling Dr. Franklin,) praised your frugality, diligence, and temperance, which he considered as a pattern for all youth; but it is singular that he should have forgotten your modesty, and your disinterestedness, without which you never could have waited for your advancement, or found your situation in the mean time comfortable; which is a strong lesson to show the poverty of glory, and the importance of regulating our minds.

"If this correspondent had known the nature of your reputation as well as I do, he would have said, your former writings and measures would secure attention to your biography and *Art of Virtue;* and your biography and *Art of Virtue*, in return, would secure attention to them. This is an advantage attendant upon a various character, and which brings all that belongs to it into greater play; and it is the more useful, as perhaps more persons are at a loss for the *means* of improving their minds and characters, than they are for the time or the inclination to do it.

"But there is one concluding reflection, Sir, that will show the use of your life as a mere piece of biography. This style of writing seems a little gone out of vogue, and yet it is a very useful one; and your specimen of it may be particularly serviceable, as it will make a subject of comparison with the lives of various pub-

lic cut-throats and intriguers, and with absurd monastic self-tormentors, or vain literary triflers. If it encourages more writings of the same kind with your own, and induces more men to spend lives fit to be written, it will be worth all Plutarch's Lives put together."

But, being tired of figuring to myself a character of which every feature suits only one man in the world, without giving him the praise of it; I shall end my letter, my dear Dr. Franklin, with a personal application to your proper self.

I am earnestly desirous then, my dear Sir, that you should let the world into the traits of your genuine character, as civil broils may otherwise tend to disguise or traduce it. Considering your great age, the caution of your character, and your peculiar style of thinking, it is not likely that any one besides yourself can be sufficiently master of the facts of your life, or the intentions of your mind.

Besides all this, the immense revolution of the present period will necessarily turn our attention towards the author of it; and when virtuous principles have been pretended in it, it will be highly important to show that such have really influenced; and, as your own character will be the principal one to receive a scrutiny, it is proper (even for its effects upon your vast and rising country, as well as upon England and upon Europe), that it should stand respectable and eternal. For the furtherance of human happiness, I have always maintained, that it is necessary to prove that man is not even at present a vicious and detestable animal; and still more to prove, that good management may greatly amend him; and it is for much the same reason, that I am anxious to see the opinion established, that there are fair characters existing

among the individuals of the race; for the moment that all men, without exception, shall be conceived abandoned, good people will cease efforts deemed to be hopeless, and perhaps think of taking their share in the scramble of life, or at least of making it comfortable principally for themselves.

Take then, my dear Sir, this work most speedily into hand; show yourself good as you are good, temperate as you are temperate; and above all things, prove yourself as one, who, from your infancy, have loved justice, liberty, and concord, in a way that has made it natural and consistent for you to have acted, as we have seen you act in the last seventeen years of your life. Let Englishmen be made not only to respect, but even to love you. When they think well of individuals in your native country, they will go nearer to thinking well of your country; and, when your countrymen see themselves well thought of by Englishmen, they will go nearer to thinking well of England. Extend your views even further; do not stop at those who speak the English tongue, but, after having settled so many points in nature and politics, think of bettering the whole race of men.

As I have not read any part of the life in question, but know only the character that lived it, I write somewhat at hazard. I am sure, however, that the life, and the treatise I allude to on the *Art of Virtue*, will necessarily fulfil the chief of my expectations; and still more so, if you take up the measure of suiting these performances to the several views above stated. Should they even prove unsuccessful in all that a sanguine admirer of yours hopes from them, you will at least have framed pieces to interest the human mind; and whoever gives a feeling of pleasure that is innocent to man, has added so much to the fair side of a life

otherwise too much darkened by anxiety, and too much injured by pain.

In the hope therefore that you will listen to the prayer addressed to you in this letter, I beg to subscribe myself, my dearest Sir, &c.

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

FROM THE EARL OF BUCHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Emigration from Scotland to the United States.

Edinburgh, 18 February, 1783.

SIR,

You were entitled to a civic crown on my account a great many years ago, when, at the University of St. Andrews, you gave a turn to the career of a disorder, which then threatened my life. You have, since that time, done so much, and Heaven has at last been pleased to bless and crown your endeavours with so much success, that civic crowns of a more important nature are due to you, and certainly await you, if there is any such thing as public gratitude on the face of the earth.

Many of my acquaintances in this part of the world seem disposed to seek for an asylum on the other side of the Atlantic; and, knowing my steady attachment and affection to a people, who received my great-grandfather when an exile, or rather a fugitive from his country, during the administration of Lauderdale in Scotland, have applied to me for information on the subject of settling in the United States.

Before the troubles commenced, I had meditated a settlement on the estates of the Lord Fairfax in Virginia; but, Lord Fairfax being since dead, and my

connexions altered in that family, I have not thought of renewing my inquiries in that quarter.*

What I wish to promote is the happy settlement of my countrymen in North America, in the territory of the United States; such countrymen being friends to the principles, which gave independence to that country; persons also of good characters and virtuous conduct, who find themselves cramped and unhappy in a country, now very unfit for the residence of such individuals, as have not very a considerable fortune to attach them to home. I foresee a spirit of emigration, and I wish as much as possible to give it a direction, which may tend to the happiness of those, in whom, from a similarity of sentiment, I must necessarily find myself very much interested. I have the honor and pleasure to be, Sir, with great respect and attachment, &c. BUCHAN.

FROM M. ROSENCRONE, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN DENMARK, TO M. DE WALTERSTORF.

Respecting a Treaty of Commerce between Denmark and the United States.

Translation.

Copenhagen, 22 February, 1783.

SIR,

As I know you are on the point of making a tour to France, I cannot omit warmly recommending to you to endeavour, during your stay at Paris, to gain as much as possible the confidence and esteem of Mr. Franklin.

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* For an account of Lord Fairfax, and his estates in Virginia, see SPARKS's edition of *Washington's Writings*, Vol. I. p. 12; Vol. II. p. 182.

You will recollect, Sir, what I said to you in our conversations, of the high respect which all the King's ministry have for that minister. You have witnessed the satisfaction with which we have learned the glorious issue of this war for the United States of America, and how fully we are persuaded, that it will be for the general interest of the two States to form, as soon as possible, reciprocal connexions of friendship and commerce. Nothing, certainly, would be more agreeable to us, than to learn by your letters, that you find the same dispositions in Mr. Franklin; and in that case, it seems to me, the shortest way of accelerating these new connexions would be, to take the treaty between the Congress and the States-General for the basis, and that Mr. Franklin should communicate to us his ideas on the changes or additions, which he might think reciprocally useful in the treaty of commerce, which Congress might conclude with us.

We should eagerly and frankly reply to such overtures; and, as soon as the changes thus agreed on shall have met the approbation of Congress, one of the persons commissioned by that body, then in Europe, might, in order to gain time, come here with full powers to conclude, leaving on both sides the more particular stipulations for the negotiations of the ministers, whom those States shall, in the sequel, send to reside with each other.

I shall finish, Sir, with hoping that you may happily terminate the visits you have proposed to make to the different parts of France; and it is with sentiments of the most distinguished respect, that I have the honor to be, &c. ROSENCRONE.

FROM BENJAMIN VAUGHAN TO B. FRANKLIN.

Terms of the Peace not approved in England. — Parties in England. — Lord Shelburne. — Mr. Fox.

London, 25 February, 1783.

My dear Sir,

You now see verified all that I said about binding down England to so hard a peace. It has put many good people into ill humor, and it has given a thousand pretexts to the bad people among us. But the overthrow of parties is nothing to the overthrow of systems relative to English commerce, which was intended to be placed on a footing, that would have been an example to all mankind, and probably have restored England to her pinnacle again. America, I am sure, we should have had as much of, as could be expected upon the proposed systems of liberality.

But, however the ministry shall finally arrange itself, I cannot but hope on all hands, that we shall be more or less cured of our fighting and monopolizing notions, and look to an American *friendship*. The boldness of my friend's conduct,* therefore, has done infinite service to men's minds, as his conversation has done to the royal mind. You will take pleasure in hearing, that he talked of making England a free port, for which he said we were fitted by nature, capital, love of enterprise, maritime connexions, and position between the old and new world, and the North and South of Europe, and that those, who were best circumstanced for trade, could not but be gainers by having trade open. Indeed, I may now say to you with

* Alluding probably to Lord Shelburne, the minister under whom the peace was made.

courage, that I have scarcely seen or heard any thing of what has passed already, or was meant to take place hereafter, that I do not approve and applaud, as conducted upon grand principles. In short, I think, that at last England will mend, not her parties indeed, but the proceedings of those who remain in office, whoever they may be.

The public are not yet instructed in the system of their peace; but pains are taking for this purpose by a respectable friend of yours, and more too will be said in the House. But the ministry were confounded, all but one or two men, at the junction of parties, against them; for, had the crisis of the peace been missed for an attack, the opposition, as politicians, knew that no other would offer, and the ministry would become fixed, and even popular. I do not, however, find that the man of the people* has gained much in the public estimation by his union with Lord North, or his conduct about the peace.

To you I need not point out any of the absurdities of the public proceedings; but you will now see who has been your friend, and upon what principles; for he *might* have made closer terms with you, had he thought either the measure or *manner* wise. I am much satisfied at having heard him say, that he repented of nothing of all that he had done, that he would do it all over again, and that he sees that he alone had the resolution to go through it. God be praised that it is done, and that no one asks to have it undone! I am, my dear Sir, yours ever most devotedly and affectionately,

BENJAMIN VAUGHAN.

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* Mr. Fox.

FROM THOMAS POWNALL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Congratulation on the Peace. — Remarks on the Condition and Prospects of the United States.

Richmond, Surrey, 26 February, 1783.

My old Friend,

I write this to congratulate you on the establishment of your country, as a free and sovereign power, taking its equal station amongst the powers of this world. I congratulate you in particular, as chosen by Providence to be a principal instrument of this great revolution; a revolution, that has stronger marks of divine interposition, superseding the ordinary course of human affairs, than any other event, which this world has experienced. Even where God is supposed to work miracles, he uses human means; and it has pleased him to make you the means of this blessing to America, and, under her establishment in political freedom, of a blessing to all men, who are worthy of it, and willing to partake of it.

You expressed a fear, that you should not see peace in your days. You may now say, "Let now thy servant, O Lord, depart in peace, for he hath seen thy salvation." Solon, a real patriot and great philosopher, like yourself, used to say, that it is not the man who *lives*, but who *dies* in happiness, that is to be accounted a *happy* man. You see, that the contemplation of this wonderful event has thrown my mind into a religious frame, and that my words take their form from it. Yet I express but in part what I feel.

I am embarked for another voyage to the Azores. I shall write a second memorial, and address it to the "Sovereigns of America."* I use none of the Gothic

* Governor Pownall had lately written a "Memorial addressed to the Sovereigns of Europe."

titles of modern Europe, or the servile ones of Asia, as though I was addressing myself to the republic of Rome, *Senatu populoque Romano.* I address myself to the *United States and citizens* of America. I wish by this to express the most marked and profound reverence to a *sovereignty of free citizens.* If the title of *Address,* which I use, is wrong, or if there is any other form yet adopted, set me right. I should be sorry to be wrong in this *peace-offering,* in these first-fruits.

I have taken the liberty to enclose to you two letters for my friends, Mr. Bowdoin and Dr. Cooper, with a power of attorney to them to make for me a deed of gift to Harvard College of five hundred acres of land which I have (and which was not confiscated) in Pownalborough, in the State of Massachusetts Bay. I have not directed the one for Mr. Bowdoin, as I should be sorry to be wrong in the mode of address. Will you be so good as to direct it, or tell the bearer of this how to do it?

I continue under the idea of my scheme of making the tour of America. I cannot but think, that, if there ever was an object worth the travelling to see, and worthy of the contemplation of a philosopher, it is that in which he may see the beginnings of a great empire at its foundation. Our politicians are quarrelling, in their scrambles, with the peace, and the House of Commons are declaring themselves dissatisfied with the line, which divides the two empires. This seems like a caution set by Providence openly before the eyes of the States of America, to mark out to them the danger of dissension, and the necessity of union. Where there is a danger, that the internal principle of attraction is not sufficient to hold the parts united in their centre, it is happy for that system, that the

external compelling principle should act to the same end.

I hope the crisis of pain, under which you were suffering, is gone off, and that you are in good health to enjoy the happiness you must feel. That God may bless you, is the wish and prayer of your old friend,

THOMAS POWNALL.

P. S. I am this day made happy by having received and hung up an excellent portrait of you, my old friend, copied from that which West did for you.*

TO JOHN COAKLEY LETTSOM.

Passy, 6 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor of September last. It found me laboring under a painful disorder, which continued long, and put me much behindhand in my correspondence. I thank you for the valuable publications that accompanied it, particularly those of your own composition, which I read with pleasure.

Our late excellent friend† was always proposing something for the good of mankind. You will find instances of this in one of his letters which I enclose, the only one I can at present lay my hand on. I have some very valuable ones in America, if they are not lost in the late confusions. You will be so kind as to return it to me, after having extracted from it what you may think proper. Just before I left England, he, in conjunction with Mr. Barclay and myself, la-

* The original of this picture by West, is now in the possession of Mr. Edward D. Ingraham, of Philadelphia.

† Dr. Fothergill.

bored hard to prevent the coming war, but our endeavours were fruitless. This transaction is alluded to in the paragraph that begins at the bottom of the first page. If we may estimate the goodness of a man by his disposition to do good, and his constant endeavours and success in doing it, I can hardly conceive that a better man has ever existed.

I desire to be considered as a subscriber, if there is a subscription, for two sets of his works, which I will pay for on demand. With great esteem, I am, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Loan in France.

Passy, 7 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

With this I send you a copy of the last contract I made with this court, respecting the late loan of six millions, the terms of the loan, and the times of repayment. It was impossible for me to obtain more, and, indeed, considering the state of finances and expenses here, I wonder I have obtained so much. You will see by the enclosed Gazette, that the government is obliged to stop payment for a year of its own bills of exchange, drawn in America and the East Indies; yet it has advanced six millions to save the credit of ours. You will, I am sure, do all in your power to avoid drawing beyond your funds here; for I am absolutely assured, that no farther aid for this year is to be expected; and it will not be strange, that they should suffer your bills to take the same fate with their own.

You will also see in the contract fresh marks of the

King's goodness towards us, in giving so long a term for payment, and forgiving the first year's interest. I hope the ravings of a certain mischievous madman here against France and its ministers, which I hear of every day, will not be regarded in America, so as to diminish in the least the happy union that has hitherto subsisted between the two nations, and which is indeed the solid foundation of our present importance in Europe. With great esteem, I am ever, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Paris, 7 March, 1783.

SIR,

I but this moment hear of this opportunity, by which I can only send you a line to acquaint you, that I have concluded the treaty with Sweden, which was signed on Wednesday last. You will have a copy by the first good opportunity. It differs very little from the plan sent me; in nothing material.* The English court is in confusion by another change of ministry, Lord Shelburne and his friends having resigned; but it is not yet certainly known who will succeed, though Lord North and Mr. Fox are talked of as two, they being reconciled! I cannot add, but that I am, with great esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. The change in the ministry is not supposed of any importance respecting our definitive treaty, which must conform to the preliminaries; but we shall see.

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* This treaty is printed in the public *Journals of Congress*, Vol. IV. p. 241, under the date of July 29th, 1783.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

London, 12 March, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It is a long while since I have heard from you, or indeed since I wrote to you. I heartily congratulate you on those pacific events, which have already happened, and I wish to see all other final steps of conciliation succeed speedily. I send you copies of two papers, which I have already communicated to Mr. Laurens; the one called *Conciliatory Propositions, in March*, 1783; the other, *A Sketch of a Provisional Treaty of Commerce, for opening the Ports between Great Britain and the United States of America without Delay;* to each of which is prefixed a short state of the argument on each head.*

As for the news of this country, you have doubtless heard, that Lord Shelburne's administration has for some time been considered as at an end; although no other has been as yet substituted in the place of it. It was understood yesterday, and I believe with good foundation, that what is now called the Portland party have been applied to, and they are now considered as the party most likely to succeed. As far as my wishes go, such an event would be most satisfactory to me. I have known the Duke of Portland for many years; and by experience I know him to be a nobleman of the strictest honor, and of the soundest whig principles, sincere and explicit in every thought and transaction, manly in his judgment, and firm in his conduct. The kingdom of Ireland, of which he was lately Lord Lieutenant, bears unanimous testimony to

* See these papers in the *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV. pp. 78, 80.

this character of him. The Cavendish family (a good whig name), Mr. Fox, Lord Fitzwilliam, &c. &c. form the core of his system and connexions. I most earnestly wish to see a firm administration upon a whig foundation, which I should consider as a solid basis, on the part of this country, for a perpetual correspondence of amity and conciliation with America. I am very anxious to hear of your health. God bless you. Ever your most affectionate

D. Hartley.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.

Lands and new Settlements in America.

Passy, 17 March, 1783.

My Lord,

I received the letter your Lordship did me the honor of writing to me, and am obliged by your kind congratulations on the return of peace, which I hope will be lasting.

With regard to the terms on which lands may be acquired in America, and the manner of beginning new settlements on them, I cannot give better information than may be found in a book lately printed in London, under some such title as *Letters from a Pennsylvania Farmer*, by Hector St. John. The only encouragements we hold out to strangers are, a good climate, fertile soil, wholesome air and water, plenty of provisions and fuel, good pay for labor, kind neighbours, good laws, liberty, and a hearty welcome; the rest depends on a man's own industry and virtue. Lands are cheap, but they must be bought. All settlements are undertaken at private expense; the public contributes nothing but defence and justice. I should not,

however, expect much emigration from a country so much drained of men as yours* must have been by the late war; since the more that have left it, the more room and the more encouragement remain for those who stayed at home. But this you can best judge of; and I have long observed of your people, that their sobriety, frugality, industry, and honesty seldom fail of success in America, and of procuring them a good establishment among us.

I do not recollect the circumstance you are pleased to mention, of my having saved a citizen of St. Andrew's, by giving a turn to his disorder; and I am curious to know what the disorder was, and what the advice I gave which proved so salutary.† With great regard, I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO JONATHAN SHIPLEY.

On the Peace with America.

Passy, 17 March, 1783.

I received with great pleasure my dear and respected friend's letter of the 5th instant, as it informed me of the welfare of a family I so much esteem and love.

The clamor against the peace in your Parliament would alarm me for its duration, if I were not of opinion with you, that the attack is rather against the minister. I am confident, none of the opposition would

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* Scotland.

† It was a fever in which the Earl of Buchan, then Lord Cadross, lay sick at St. Andrew's; and the advice was, not to blister, according to the old practice and the opinion of the learned Dr. Simson, brother of the celebrated geometrician at Glasgow. — W. T. F.

have made a better peace for England, if they had been in his place; at least, I am sure that Lord Stormont, who seems loudest in railing at it, is not the man that could have mended it. My reasons I will give you, when I have, what I hope to have, the great happiness of seeing you once more, and conversing with you.

They talk much of there being no *reciprocity* in our treaty. They think nothing, then, of our passing over in silence the atrocities committed by their troops, and demanding no satisfaction for their wanton burnings and devastations of our fair towns and countries. They have heretofore confessed the war to be unjust, and nothing is plainer in reasoning than that the mischiefs done in an unjust war should be repaired. Can Englishmen be so partial to themselves, as to imagine they have a right to plunder and destroy as much as they please, and then, without satisfying for the injuries they have done, to have peace on equal terms? We were favorable, and did not demand what justice entitled us to. We shall probably be blamed for it by our constituents; and I still think it would be the interest of England voluntarily to offer reparation of those injuries, and effect it as much as may be in her power. But this is an interest she will never see.

Let us now forgive and forget. Let each country seek its advancement in its own internal advantages of arts and agriculture, not in retarding or preventing the prosperity of the other. America will, with God's blessing, become a great and happy country; and England, if she has at length gained wisdom, will have gained something more valuable, and more essential to her prosperity, than all she has lost; and will still be a great and respectable nation. Her great disease at present is the number and enormous salaries and

emoluments of office. Avarice and ambition are strong passions, and, separately, act with great force on the human mind; but, when both are united, and may be gratified in the same object, their violence is almost irresistible, and they hurry men headlong into factions and contentions, destructive of all good government. As long, therefore, as these great emoluments subsist, your Parliament will be a stormy sea, and your public councils confounded by private interests. But it requires much public spirit and virtue to abolish them; more perhaps than can now be found in a nation so long corrupted. I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SIR WILLIAM JONES.

Passy, 17 March, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND,

I duly received your obliging letter of November 15th. You will have since learned how much I was then, and have been continually engaged in public affairs, and your goodness will excuse my not having answered it sooner. You announced your intended marriage with my much respected friend, Miss Anna Maria, which I assure you gave me great pleasure, as I cannot conceive a match more likely to be happy, from the amiable qualities each of you possesses so plentifully. You mention its taking place, as soon as a prudent attention to worldly interests would permit. I just now learn from Mr. Hodgson, that you are appointed to an honorable and profitable place in the Indies; so I expect now soon to hear of the wedding, and to receive the profile. With the good Bishop's permission, I will join my blessing with his; adding my wishes, that you may return from that corrupting

country, with a great deal of money honestly acquired, and with full as much virtue as you carry out with you.*

The engraving of my medal, which you know was projected before the peace, is but just finished. None are yet struck in hard metal, but will be in a few days. In the mean time, having this good opportunity by Mr. Penn, I send you one of the *épreuves*. You will see that I have profited by some of your ideas, and adopted the mottos you were so kind as to furnish.

I am at present quite recovered from my late illness, and flatter myself that I may in the ensuing summer be able to undertake a trip to England, for the pleasure of seeing once more my dear friends there, among whom the Bishop and his family stand foremost in my estimation and affection. I thank you for your good wishes respecting me. Mine for your welfare and prosperity are not less earnest and sincere; being with great truth, dear Sir, your affectionate friend, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.†

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* In March, 1783, Sir William Jones was appointed a judge of the supreme court of judicature in Bengal, on which occasion the honor of knighthood was conferred upon him. He was married to Anna Maria Shipley the following month. See Lord Teignmouth's *Life of Sir William Jones*, 2d ed. p. 222.

† It appears, that at this time it was expected by some of Dr. Franklin's friends, that he would visit Vienna; but whether he ever formed any plan for this purpose is uncertain. The following is an extract from a letter written to him by Dr. Ingenhousz.

"I am daily asked, whether you will soon be here. Some time ago, M. Veinbrenner told me, that he had written a letter to you by order of the first minister of state, Prince Kaunitz, of which I send the enclosed copy. He had at that time written to the same purpose to Count Mercy [Austrian Ambassador at the court of Versailles], to whom the Emperor has now given official orders to invite you to his house, and to treat you on the footing of a minister of a sovereign power. M. Veinbrenner also informed me, that the imperial ambassador has orders to intimate to you, that the Emperor is ready to acknowledge the United States a sovereign and independent power, as

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Passy, 23 March, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing to me, requesting a recommendation to America, of Mr. Joshua Grigby. I have accordingly written one, and, having an opportunity the other day, I sent it under cover to Mr. Benjamin Vaughan. The general proclamations you wished, for suspending, or rather putting an end to, hostilities, are now published; so that your "heart is at rest," and mine with it. You may depend on my joining my hearty endeavours with yours in "cultivating conciliatory principles between our two countries"; and I may venture to assure you, that if your bill for a provisional establishment of the commerce had passed as at first proposed, a stipulation on our part in the definitive treaty, to allow reciprocal and equal advantages and privileges to your subjects, would have been readily agreed to. With great and sincere esteem, I am ever, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

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soon as you, or any other person properly authorized, shall take any step towards that purpose. M. Veinbrenner, not having received an answer from you, was advised by Prince Kaunitz and another state secretary to speak to me about it, and request me to press for the favor of an answer, which I told him I would do as soon as I should write to you."— *Vienna, April 8th*, 1783.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.*

Requesting Permission to publish in Paris a Translation of the Constitutions of the United States.

Passy, 24 March, 1783.

SIR,

I am desirous of printing a translation of the Constitutions of the United States of America, published at Philadelphia, in 1781, by order of Congress. Several of these Constitutions have already appeared in the English and American newspapers; others have appeared elsewhere; but there has never yet been a complete translation of them. That, of which I have the honor to speak to your Excellency, being an octavo volume, contains the different Constitutions of the United States, their treaty with France, and no foreign matter. I have made arrangements for this purpose with M. Pierres, who is ready to commence the impression, and I hope that your Excellency will give your approbation.

M. Pierres will need a permit from the Keeper of the Seals for printing and selling this work, after having furnished me with the number of copies agreed upon. As I strongly desire, that this translation may appear at an early day, I shall feel under great obligations to your Excellency, if you will have the goodness to request the Keeper of the Seals to send the order without delay; and, should the formalities required for the purpose demand any considerable time, to request him to authorize by letter M. Pierres to proceed with the work. I have the honor to be, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

* This letter is translated from a French copy.

FROM FRANCIS HOPKINSON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, 27 March, 1783.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND,

To be noticed by the great is an honor, but to enjoy the friendship of the good is more than honor; it is happiness. I was much gratified by your kind letter by Captain Barney, and thank you for the *Première Livraison* of the *Encyclopédie.*

A vessel arrived here a few days ago express from Cadiz, with letters from the Marquis de Lafayette, announcing *peace* to all the world. This has diffused general joy through this suffering country. Yet there are some, who, though they cannot be sorry for it with a good grace, are nevertheless sorry. I mean those, who have large quantities of goods on hand at *war* prices. But, if it should never rain till it suited every individual's convenience, the whole world would blow away in dust. The terms for America are unexceptionable; the boundary lines of the United States liberal and permanent. I have heard no objections. Even long-sighted politicians, of the *Grumbletonian* fraternity, seem satisfied.

Blessings, like misfortunes, seldom come unaccompanied. I am told you intend to return and spend the remainder of your days at home. This will be a most agreeable gratification to your friends; to none more than to me. America gave you breath; you have repaid the obligation by being so principally instrumental in giving her peace, liberty, and independence. Individuals will readily acknowledge how much the public is indebted to you for your important services. How far the public will be found grateful, is a problem. The least, I think, that can be expected, is, that you

may enjoy the remainder of your days in ease and honor. The official despatches respecting the peace are looked for every day, and great pageantries are preparing for the joyful proclamation.

You flatter my vanity by approving of my piece respecting the *Trees*. The law was repealed, and the innocents were saved from slaughter.

I amused myself one snowy day with devising a new game at cards. I enclose you a copy of the rules, printed on the wrapping paper of each pack, and also a couple of the cards as a sample. They are not so well executed as I could wish, but may serve for a first essay. My object was to make my children dexterous and critical in spelling, and to give them a knowledge of the use of letters in the formation of words. These cards are getting into great vogue.* Adieu, and be assured I am ever your faithful and affectionate FRANCIS HOPKINSON.

FROM DAVID HARTLEY TO B. FRANKLIN.

Communicating a Supplemental Treaty.

London, 31 March, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I send you a paper entitled *Supplemental Treaty*,† the substance of which I sent you some time ago, as I read it in part of a speech in the House of Commons. I have given a copy of it to Mr. L——, as the grounds upon which my friend, the Duke of Portland, would have wished that any administration, in

* See a piece entitled *A New Game with Cards for the Improvement of Orthography*, contained in HOPKINSON's *Miscellaneous Essays*, &c., Vol. I. p. 290.

† See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV. p. 92.

which he might have taken a part, should have treated with the American ministers. All negotiations for the formation of a ministry in concert with the Duke of Portland are at an end.

The tenth article, which is supposed to be referred to the definitive treaty, is a renewal of the same proposition, which I moved in Parliament some years ago, viz. on the 9th of April, 1778. I see nothing inconsistent with that proposition, either in the declaration of independence, or in the treaty with France. Let it therefore remain, and emerge after the war, as a point untouched by the war. I assure you my consent should not be wanting to extend this principle between all the nations upon earth. I know full well, that those nations, to which you and I are bound by birth and consanguinity, would reap the earliest fruits from it. *Owing no man hate, and envying no man's happiness*, I should rejoice in the lot of my own country, and on her part say to America, *Nos duo turba sumus.* I send you, likewise, enclosed with this, some sentiments respecting the principles of some late negotiations, drawn up in the shape of Parliamentary motions by my brother, who joins with me in the sincerest good wishes to you for health and happiness, and for the peace of our respective countries and of mankind. Your ever affectionate D. HARTLEY.

FROM M. SALVA TO B. FRANKLIN.

Attempt of the Algerines to seize American Vessels.

Translation.

Algiers, 1 April, 1783.

SIR,

The imminent danger to which the vessels of your nation were exposed, which sailed in March last from

Marseilles, and which owed their safety to the god of the seas alone, emboldens me to call your attention to this point.

Some secret enemies (whom I know) having given information to this Regency of their departure, nine armed ships immediately sailed to wait for them at Cape Palos. It is to be presumed, that the Americans had passed the Straits.

Algiers has many ships, and the politics of certain European powers do not restrain them from paying tribute to enjoy peace; they make use of these human harpies as a terror to the belligerent nations, whose commerce they chain to the car of Algerine piracy. We saw an example of this, when his Imperial Majesty, to protect his flag, made use of the firman of the Sublime Porte. It was attacked, and five prizes were brought into this port in 1781, four of which with ballast were restored in February, 1782, at the claim of a Capapigi Bashaw of the Porte, and of M. Timone, the Imperial agent, who was expelled, and whose correspondent I am, having been his secretary on this occasion, and having revealed to his Highness, Prince Kaunitz-Rietberg, minister at the court of Vienna, horrors and crimes, which would have remained unpunished but for my pen.

Humanity alone, Sir, has engaged me to give you this advice. I request you will be pleased to keep it secret; your prudence will effect what may be necessary on this occasion.

I have the honor to offer you every information respecting this port, and flatter myself that I shall succeed therein. I think to depart from this in May or June next for Marseilles, and to leave these barbarian pirates. I have the honor to be, &c.

SALVA.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 5 April, 1783.

Sir,

I have communicated to the Keeper of the Seals the request you have made for publishing a translation of the book of the *Constitutions of the United States.* The Keeper of the Seals has answered me, that he has authorized M. Pierres, the printer, to commence an impression of this work, on condition of his sending the sheets, as fast as they shall be printed, to M. de Neville, the director-general of the press, in order that he may intrust them to a censor for examination. The rules relative to the press make this last formality indispensable. I have the honor to be very sincerely, Sir, &c.

De Vergennes.

TO THE GRAND MASTER OF MALTA.

Passy, 6 April, 1783.

My Lord,

I have the honor to address to your Eminent Highness the medal, which I have lately had struck. It is a homage of gratitude, my Lord, which is due to the interest you have taken in our cause; and we no less owe it to your virtues, and to your Eminent Highness's wise administration of government.*

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* This medal has already been described; see above, p. 173. It was executed according to a device suggested by Dr. Franklin. Several medals have also been struck at different times in honor of Franklin. The following list of some of them has been furnished by Mr. Joshua Francis Fisher, of Philadelphia. They are likewise in part described

Permit me, my Lord, to demand your protection for such of our citizens as circumstances may lead to your ports. I hope that your Eminent Highness will be pleased to grant it to them, and kindly receive the assurances of the profound respect with which I am, my Lord, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

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by Dr. Mease, in the *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Vol. IV., 3d Series.

1. A medal apparently struck in England.
   Obverse. — Full face of Franklin in a cap and with open shirt collar; likeness not good.
   Legend. — B. FRANKLIN OF PHILADELPHIA, LL.D. & F.R.S.
   Reverse. — An Oak Tree struck by lightning.
   Legend. — NON IRRITA FULMINA CURAT.
   Exergue. — 1777.
2. French Medal.
   Obverse. — A Head of Franklin.
   Legend. — BENJ'N FRANKLIN MINIST. PLÉN. DES ETATS UNIS DE L'AMÉRIQ. SEPT. MDCCLXXXIII.
   Reverse. — The Temple of Independence; three of the Nine Sisters are engaged in working at the columns; four are chiseling a block of stone; two are conversing.
   Legend. — DE LEURS TRAVAUX NAÎTRE LEUR GLOIRE.
3. French Medal.
   Obverse. — Head and Bust of Franklin; his locks flowing down over the shoulders. Engraved by Dupré.
   Legend. — BENJ. FRANKLIN NATUS BOSTON. XVII. JAN. MDCCVI.
   Reverse. — Figure of an Angel standing, with one hand pointing to the lightning in the clouds, and the other to a broken sceptre and crown at his feet. In the back ground a Temple with a Conductor.
   Legend. — ERIPUIT CŒLO FULMEN SCEPTRUMQUE TYRANNIS.
   Exergue. — SCULPSIT ET DICAVIT AUG. DUPRÉ, ANNO MDCCLXXXIV.
4. French Medal.
   Obverse. — The same as the last.
   Reverse. — ERIPUIT CŒLO FULMEN SCEPTRUMQUE TYRANNIS, surrounded with a wreath of oak leaves.
   Exergue. — SCULPSIT ET DICAVIT AUG. DUPRÉ, ANNO MDCCLXXXV,
5. Masonic Medal.
   Obverse. — Fine Bust of Franklin.
   Legend. — BENJAMINUS FRANKLIN.
   Reverse. — Masonic symbols; the serpent ring, carpenter's square and compass. In the centre, a triangle and the sacred name in Hebrew.
   Legend. — LES. MAÇ ∴ FRANÇ ∴ Λ FRANKLIN. M ∴ DE LA L — DES 9 SŒURS O ∴ DE PARIS 5, 778 — 5829.

TO M. ROSENCRONE.

Proposed Treaty with Denmark. — Asks Reparation for Vessels seized at Bergen.

Passy, 13 April, 1783.

Sir,

M. de Walterstorf has communicated to me a letter from your Excellency, which affords me great pleasure, as it expresses in clear and strong terms the good disposition of your court* to form connexions of friendship and commerce with the United States of America. I am confident, that the same good disposition will be found in the Congress; and, having acquainted that respectable body with the purport of your letter, I expect a commission will soon be sent, appointing some person in Europe to enter into a treaty with his Majesty the King of Denmark, for the purpose desired.

In the mean time, to prepare and forward the business as much as may be, I send, for your Excellency's

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6. Medal engraved at Philadelphia, by the direction of Joseph Sansom.
   Obverse. — Bust of Franklin.
   Legend. — LIGHTNING AVERTED, TYRANNY REPELLED.
   Reverse. — An American Beaver gnawing down an oak tree; symbolical of the condition of America at the declaration of Independence.
7. Another of Sansom's Medals.
   Obverse. — Busts of Washington and Franklin, side by side.
   Reverse. — The American Eagle with an olive-branch in its beak, and lightning in its claws, descending upon the United States; symbolical of the event of peace at the close of the war.
8. French Medal.
   Obverse. — Bust of Franklin.
   Legend. — BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.
   Reverse. — *Legend*, in parallel lines; NATUS BOSTONIÆ IN AMERICA FŒDERATA AN. M. DCC. VI. OBIIT AN. M. DCC. XC. SERIES NUMISMATICA UNIVERSALIS VIRORUM ILLUSTRIUM.
   Exergue. — M. DCCC. XIX. DURAND EDIDIT.

* The court of Denmark. See the letter referred to, p. 487.

consideration, such a sketch as you mention, formed on the basis of our treaty with Holland, on which I shall be glad to receive your Excellency's sentiments. And I hope that this transaction, when completed, may be the means of producing and securing a long and happy friendship between our two nations.

To smooth the way for obtaining this desirable end, as well as to comply with my duty, it becomes necessary for me on this occasion to mention to your Excellency the affair of our three prizes, which, having during the war entered Bergen as a neutral and friendly port, where they might repair the damages they had suffered, and procure provisions, were, by an order of your predecessor in the office you so honorably fill, violently seized and delivered to our enemies. I am inclined to think it was a hasty act, procured by the importunities and misrepresentations of the British minister, and that your government could not, on reflection, approve of it. But the injury was done, and I flatter myself your Excellency will think with me, that it ought to be repaired. The means and manner I beg leave to recommend to your consideration, and am, with great respect, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Denmark. — Definitive Treaty delayed. — British Commerce. — Medal. — People desiring to emigrate to America. — French Finances.

Passy, 15 April, 1783.

SIR,

You complain sometimes of not hearing from us. It is now near three months since any of us have heard from America. I think our last letters came

with General de Rochambeau. There is now a project under consideration for establishing monthly packet boats between France and New York, which I hope will be carried into execution; our correspondence then may be more regular and frequent.

I send herewith another copy of the treaty concluded with Sweden. I hope, however, that you will have received the former, and that the ratification is forwarded. The King, as the ambassador informs me, is now employed in examining the duties payable in his ports, with a view of lowering them in favor of America, and thereby encouraging and facilitating our mutual commerce.

M. de Walterstorf, chamberlain of the King of Denmark, formerly chief justice of the Danish West India Islands, was last year at Paris, where I had some acquaintance with him, and he is now returned hither. The newspapers have mentioned him as intended to be sent minister from his court to Congress; but he tells me no such appointment has yet been made. He assures me, however, that the King has a strong desire to have a treaty of friendship and commerce with the United States; and he has communicated to me a letter, which he received from M. Rosencrone, the minister for foreign affairs, expressing that disposition. I enclose a copy of the letter; and, if Congress shall approve of entering into such a treaty with the King of Denmark, of which I told M. de Walterstorf I made no doubt, they will send to me, or whom else they shall think proper, the necessary instructions and powers for that purpose. In the mean time, to keep the business in train, I have sent to that minister, for his consideration, a translation of the plan, *mutatis mutandis*, which I received from Congress for a treaty with Sweden, accompanied by a letter, of which likewise I enclose a copy. I think it

would be well to make it one of the instructions to whoever is commissioned for the treaty, that he previously procure satisfaction for the prizes mentioned in my letter.

The definitive treaties have met with great delays, partly by the tardiness of the Dutch, but principally from the distractions in the court of England, where, for six or seven weeks, there was properly no ministry, nor any business effected. They have at last settled a ministry, but of such a composition as does not promise to be lasting. The papers will inform you who they are. It is now said, that Mr. Oswald, who signed the preliminaries, is not to return here, but that Mr. David Hartley comes in his stead to settle the definitive. A Congress is also talked of, and that some use is to be made therein of the mediation formerly proposed of the Imperial courts. Mr. Hartley is an old friend of mine, and a strong lover of peace, so that I hope we shall not have much difficult discussion with him; but I could have been content to have finished with Mr. Oswald, whom we always found very reasonable.

Mr. Laurens, having left Bath, mended in his health, is daily expected at Paris, where Messieurs Jay and Adams still continue. Mr. Jefferson has not yet arrived, nor the *Romulus*, in which ship I am told he was to have taken his passage. I have been the more impatient of this delay, from the expectation given me of full letters by him. It is extraordinary, that we should be so long without any arrivals from America in any part of Europe. We have as yet heard nothing of the reception of the preliminary articles in America, though it is now nearly five months since they were signed. Barney, indeed, did not get away from hence before the middle of January, but copies

went by other ships long before him; he waited some time for the money he carried, and afterwards was detained by violent contrary winds. He had a passport from England, and I hope arrived safe; though we have been in some pain for him, on account of a storm soon after he sailed.

The English merchants have shown great eagerness to reassume their commerce with America; but apprehending that our laws, prohibiting that commerce, would not be repealed till England had set the example by repealing theirs, a number of vessels they had loaded with goods have been detained in port, while the Parliament have been debating on the repealing bill, which has been altered two or three times, and is not agreed upon yet. It was at first proposed to give us equal privileges in trade with their own subjects, repealing thereby, with respect to us, so much of their navigation act, as regards foreign nations. But hat plan seems to be laid aside, and what will finally e done in the affair is uncertain.

There is not a port in France, and few in Europe, from which I have not received several applications of persons desiring to be appointed consuls for America. They generally offer to execute the office for the honor of it, without salary. I suppose the Congress will wait to see what course commerce will take, and in what places it will fix itself, in order to find where consuls will be necessary, before any appointments are made, and perhaps it will then be thought best to send some of our own people. If they are not allowed to trade, there must be a great expense for salaries. If they may trade, and are Americans, the fortunes they make will mostly settle in our own country at last. The agreement I was to make here respecting consuls, has not yet been concluded. The article of trading is important. I think it would be well to reconsider it.

I have caused to be struck here the medal, which I formerly mentioned to you, the design of which you seemed to approve. I enclose one of them in silver, for the President of Congress, and one in copper for yourself; the impression on copper is thought to appear best, and you will soon receive a number for the members. I have presented one to the King, and another to the Queen, both in gold, and one in silver to each of the ministers, as a monumental acknowledgment, which may go down to future ages, of the obligations we are under to this nation. It is mighty well received, and gives general pleasure. If the Congress approve of it, as I hope they will, I may add something on the die (for those to be struck hereafter) to show that it was done by their order, which I could not venture to do till I had authority for it.*

A multitude of people are continually applying to me personally, and by letters, for information respecting the means of transporting themselves, families, and fortunes to America. I give no encouragement to any of the King's subjects, as I think it would not be right in me to do it without their sovereign's approbation; and, indeed, few offer from France but persons of irregular conduct and desperate circumstances, whom we had better be without; but I think there will be great emigrations from England, Ireland, and Germany. There is a great contest among the ports, which of them shall be of those to be declared *free* for the *American trade*. Many applications are made to me to interest myself in the behalf of all of them; but having no instructions on that head, and thinking it a matter more properly belonging to the consul, I have done nothing in it.

* See a description of this medal above, p. 173.

I have continued to send you the English papers. You will often see falsehoods in them respecting what I say and do, &c. You know those papers too well to make any contradiction of such stuff necessary from me.

Mr. Barclay is often ill, and I am afraid the settlement of our accounts will be, in his hands, a long operation. I shall be impatient at being detained here on that score after the arrival of my successor. Would it not be well to join Mr. Ridley with Mr. Barclay for that service? He resides in Paris, and seems active in business. I know not, indeed, whether he would undertake it, but wish he may.

The finances here are embarrassed, and a new loan is proposed by way of lottery, in which, it is said by some calculators, the King will pay at the rate of seven per cent. I mention this to furnish you with a fresh convincing proof against cavillers of the King's generosity towards us, in lending us six millions this year at five per cent, and of his concern for our credit, in saving by that sum the honor of Mr. Morris's bills, while those drawn by his own officers abroad have their payment suspended for a year after they become due. You have been told, that France might help us more liberally if she would. This last transaction is a demonstration of the contrary.

Please to show these last paragraphs to Mr. Morris, to whom I cannot now write, the notice of this ship being short; but it is less necessary, as Mr. Grand writes to him fully. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Mr. Laurens is just arrived.

FROM THE AUSTRIAN AMBASSADOR TO B. FRANKLIN.

Soliciting Letters of Introduction for Professor Märter.

Translation.

Paris, 15 April, 1783.

Professor Märter, commissioned by the Emperor to collect from the four quarters of the globe animals and plants for his Majesty's menagerie and botanic gardens, intends to set out immediately, and to commence his travels in the United States of America.

Well knowing that the success of his undertaking must depend in a great measure upon the facilities and assistance, which he may find in the places where his researches are to be made, he feels that it would be a great advantage to him to have letters from Dr. Franklin to the general Congress, and to some individuals whose knowledge and advice may be of service to him.

The ambassador of his Majesty the Emperor, feeling it his duty to contribute as far as depends upon him to Mr. Märter's success, believes he is rendering him an essential service in making known his wishes to Dr. Franklin, and in supporting them by his own solicitations. The ambassador flatters himself, that the American minister will receive with favor a request, which has for its object the extension of the science of natural history, and that he will send him these letters to forward to Professor Märter, so that he may be enabled to present them himself upon his arrival in America.

The ambassador feels great pleasure in having this opportunity of presenting to Dr. Franklin the assurance of his perfect attachment.

FROM CHARLES J. FOX TO B. FRANKLIN.

St. James's, 19 April, 1783.

SIR,

Although it is unnecessary for me to introduce to your acquaintance a gentleman so well known to you as Mr. Hartley, who will have the honor of delivering to you this letter, yet it may be proper for me to inform you, that he has the full and entire confidence of his Majesty's ministers upon the subject of his mission.

Permit me, Sir, to take this opportunity of assuring you how happy I should esteem myself, if it were to prove my lot to be the instrument of completing a real and substantial reconciliation between two countries, formed by nature to be in a state of friendship one with the other, and thereby to put the finishing hand to a building, in laying the first stone of which I may fairly boast that I had some share. I have the honor to be, with every sentiment of regard and esteem, Sir, &c. C. J. FOX.

TO MRS. MARY HEWSON.

Passy, 26 April, 1783.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I received in its time your kind letter of February 22d. I am sensible of the prudence of your advice respecting my coming to England, and shall follow it. Accept my thanks for that, and for your kind invitation to Cheam, when I do come; but the little left of life at my age will, perhaps, hurry me home, as soon as I can be quit of my employment here. I should, indeed, have great pleasure in seeing you, and in being

some time with you and your little family. I cannot have all I wish.

Mr. Williams is now here with his family. I shall mention to him his not answering your letter. We talked yesterday of you, and of his friend Dolly, whom I have not forgotten, as she supposes. He expressed the highest esteem and regard for you both. My love to her when you see her. I send you some more of the little books, and am ever, my dear friend, yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Passy, 27 Apr., 1783.

SIR,

The Count del Veome, an Italian nobleman of great distinction, does me the honor to be the bearer of this. I have not the satisfaction to be personally acquainted with this gentleman, but am much solicited by some of my particular friends, to whom his merits and character are known, to afford him this introduction to you. He is, I understand, a great traveller, and his view in going to America is merely to see the country and its great men. I pray you will show him every civility, and afford him that counsel, which as a stranger he may stand in need of. With great respect, I am, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM COUNT DE VERGENNES TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 5 May, 1783.

SIR,

I have received the two letters of yesterday and to-day, which you have done me the honor to write to me, and a copy of the three articles discussed between the Commissioners of the United States and Mr. Hartley. You are aware, that I shall want a sufficient time to examine them before submitting to you the observations, which may relate to our reciprocal interests. Receive, in the mean time, my sincere thanks for this communication.

I hope to have the honor of seeing you to-morrow at Versailles. I trust you will be able to be present with the foreign ministers. It is observed, that the Commissioners from the United States rarely show themselves here, and inferences are drawn from it, which I am sure their constituents would disavow, if they had a knowledge of them. I have the honor to be, &c. DE VERGENNES.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 5 May, 1783.

SIR,

It was my intention to pay my devoirs at Versailles to-morrow. I thank your Excellency, nevertheless, for your kind admonition. I omitted two of the last three days, from a mistaken apprehension, that, being holidays, there would be no court. Mr. Laurens and Mr. Jay are both invalids; and, since my last severe fit of the gout, my legs have continued so weak, that I am

hardly able to keep pace with the ministers who walk fast, especially in going up and down stairs.

I beg you to be assured, that whatever deficiency there may be of strength, there is none of respect in, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO DAVID HARTLEY.

Desires the Abolition of Privateering.

Passy, 8 May, 1783.

DEAR FRIEND,

I send you enclosed the copies you desired of the papers I read to you yesterday.* I should be happy if I could see, before I die, the proposed improvement of the law of nations established. The miseries of mankind would be diminished by it, and the happiness of millions secured and promoted. If the practice of privateering could be profitable to any civilized nation, it might be so to us Americans; since we are so situated on the globe, as that the rich commerce of Europe with the West Indies, consisting of manufactures, sugars, &c., is obliged to pass before our doors, which enables us to make short and cheap cruises, while our own commerce is in such bulky, low-priced articles, as that ten of our ships taken by you are not equal in value to one of yours, and you must come far from home, at a great expense, to look for them. I hope, therefore, that this proposition, if made by us, will appear in its true light, as having humanity only for its motive. I do not wish to see a new Barbary rising in America, and our long extended coast occupied by piratical states. I fear, lest our privateering success

* See the Article about privateering, above, p. 469.

in the two last wars should already have given our people too strong a relish for that most mischievous kind of gaming, mixed blood; and, if a stop is not now put to the practice, mankind may hereafter be more plagued with American corsairs, than they have been and are with the Turkish. Try, my friend, what you can do, in procuring for your nation the glory of being, though the greatest naval power, the first who voluntarily relinquished the advantage that power seems to give them, of plundering others, and thereby impeding the mutual communications among men of the gifts of God, and rendering miserable multitudes of merchants and their families, artisans, and cultivators of the earth, the most peaceable and innocent part of the human species. With great esteem and affection, I am ever, my dear friend, yours most sincerely,

B. FRANKLIN.

FROM ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON TO B. FRANKLIN.

Philadelphia, 31 May, 1783.

SIR,

I informed you some time since, that I had written to the Court of Appeals on the subject of the *Nossa Senhora da Soledado San Miguel e Almas*, and laid before them the papers you sent me. The cause has since been determined in such a way, as will, I hope, be satisfactory to her Portuguese Majesty. I enclose the copy of a letter from the first judge of the Court of Appeals on that subject.

Nothing has yet been done as to the acceptance of your resignation, nor will, as I believe, any thing be done very hastily. Many think your task will not be very burdensome now, and that you may enjoy in peace the fruit of your past labors.

As this will probably be the last letter, which I shall have the pleasure of writing to you in my public character,* I beg leave to remind you of the affairs of the *Alliance* and the *Bon Homme Richard*, which are still unsettled. I must also pray you not to lose sight of the vessels detained by his Danish Majesty. This will be a favorable opportunity to press for their restitution. I do not see how they can decently refuse to pay for them. Great Britain is bound in honor to make them whole again.

Preparations for the evacuation of New York still go on very slowly, while the distress of our finances has compelled us to grant furloughs to the greater part of our army. If it were possible to procure any addition to the last six millions, it would be extremely useful to us at present. An entire new arrangement with respect to our foreign department is under consideration. What its fate will be, I know not. I am, &c. ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

TO M. PIERRES.

Passy, 10 June, 1783.

SIR,

I received the *exemplaire* of the Constitutions. I intended to wait on the Keeper of the Seals yesterday, at Versailles, but was prevented. I shall write to him to-day. The ratification of the Swedish treaty is arrived, so that there is no further obstruction to the publication. I desire to have fifty of the octavo copies bound in calf and lettered, and fifty half bound, that

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* Mr. Livingston resigned the office of Secretary of Foreign Affairs on the 4th of June.

is, between pasteboards with a sheepskin back, and lettered, but not cut. I desire also six of the quarto copies bound in Morocco. I am, with great esteem, Sir, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Treaty with Sweden. — Treaty with Denmark in Progress. — Portugal proposes to treat. — Definitive Treaty with England delayed.

Passy, 12 June, 1783.

SIR,

I wrote to you fully by a vessel from Nantes, which I hope will reach you before this. If not, this may inform you, that the ratification of the treaty with Sweden is come, and ready to be exchanged when I shall receive that from Congress; that the treaty with Denmark is going on, and will probably be ready before the commission for signing it arrives from Congress. It is on the plan of that proposed by Congress for Sweden.

Portugal has likewise proposed to treat with us, and the ambassador has earnestly urged me to give him a plan for the consideration of his court, which I have accordingly done, and he has forwarded it. The Congress will send commissions and instructions for concluding these treaties to whom they may think proper; it is only upon the old authority, given, by a resolution, to myself with Messrs. Deane and Lee, to treat with any European powers, that I have ventured to begin these treaties in consequence of overtures from those crowns.

The definitive treaty with England is not yet concluded, their ministry being unsettled in their minds

as to the terms of the commercial part; nor is any other definitive treaty yet completed here, nor even the preliminaries signed of one between England and Holland. It is now five months since we have had a line from you, the last being dated the 13th of January; of course we know nothing of the reception of the Preliminary Articles, or the opinion of Congress respecting them. We hoped to receive before this time such instructions as might have been thought proper to be sent to us for rendering more perfect the definitive treaty. We know nothing of what has been approved or disapproved. We are totally in the dark, and therefore, less pressing to conclude, being still (as we have long been) in daily expectation of hearing from you. By chance only, we learn that Barney is arrived, by whom went the despatches of the Commissioners, and a considerable sum of money. No acknowledgment of the receipt of that money is yet come to hand, either to me or M. Gérard. I make no doubt that both you and Mr. Morris have written, and I cannot imagine what has become of your letters. With great esteem, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. I beg leave to recommend to your civilities the bearer of this, Dr. Bancroft, whom you will find a very intelligent, sensible man, well acquainted with the state of affairs here, and who has heretofore been employed in the service of Congress. I have long known him, and esteem him highly.

FROM THE BARON DE STAËL, AMBASSADOR FROM SWEDEN, TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, 13 June, 1783.

SIR,

I have just received his Majesty's ratification of the treaty of commerce concluded with the United States, which I shall have the honor to send you as soon as it can be exchanged for the one from Congress.

Permit me, Sir, on this occasion to repeat the request, which the ambassador has made you, respecting Mr. Franklin, your grandson. He had the honor to tell you, that it would afford the King a pleasure to have a person residing with him, in the capacity of the minister of Congress, who bears your name in conjunction with such estimable qualifications as young Mr. Franklin possesses. He charged me before he departed, to repeat to you the same assurances, and you will allow me to add, on my part, my best wishes for the success of this matter. I have the honor to be, &c. LE BARON DE STAËL.

FROM THE PRINCE DE DEUX-PONTS TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Paris, 14 June, 1783.

The Prince de Deux-Ponts has already applied to Dr. Franklin for the purpose of learning whether the Palatine Electorate, and the Duchy of Bavaria, could enter into commercial relations with the thirteen United States of America. Having only obtained an answer,

which is too general in its terms to be transmitted to his constituents, he now earnestly requests Dr. Franklin to specify in writing what productions, or manufactured articles, would be most likely to become objects of a permanent and mutually advantageous intercourse. He relies on this answer, because it is demanded of him; and he hopes that Dr. Franklin will regard with favor the strong desire, manifested by several of the States of Germany, to have relations with a new power, which is in a great measure his own work.

FROM THE GRAND MASTER OF MALTA TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Malta, 21 June, 1783.

Sir,

I received with the most lively sensibility the medal, which your Excellency sent me, and the value I set upon this acquisition leaves my gratitude unbounded. This monument of American liberty has a distinguished place in my cabinet.

Whenever chance or commerce shall lead any of your fellow citizens or their vessels into the ports of my Island, I shall receive them with the greatest welcome. They shall experience from me every assistance they may claim, and I shall observe with infinite pleasure any growing connexion between that interesting nation and my subjects, especially if it will tend to convince your Excellency of the distinguished sentiments with which I am, Sir, &c.

The Grand Master, Rohan.

TO HENRY LAURENS.

Delay of the Negotiations. — Mr. Laurens's Presence necessary.

Passy, 6 July, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

We have been honored with several of your letters, and we have talked of writing to you, but it has been delayed. I will therefore write a few lines in my private capacity.

Our negotiations go on slowly, every proposition being sent to England, and answers not returning very speedily. Captain Barney arrived here last Wednesday, and brought despatches for us as late as the 1st of June. The Preliminary Articles are ratified. But General Carleton, in violation of those articles, has sent away a great number of negroes, alleging, that freedom having been promised them by a proclamation, the honor of the nation was concerned, &c. Probably another reason may be, that, if they had been restored to their masters, Britain could not have hoped any thing from such another proclamation hereafter.

Mr. Hartley called yesterday to tell us, that he had received a letter from Mr. Fox, assuring him that our suspicions of affected delays or change of system on their side were groundless; and that they were sincerely desirous to finish as soon as possible. If this be so, and your health will permit the journey, I could wish your return as soon as possible. I want you here on many accounts, and should be glad of your assistance in considering and answering our public letters. There are matters in them of which I cannot conveniently give you an account at present. Nothing could be more seasonable than success in the project you

proposed, but we have now very little expectation. Please to give my love to your valuable and amiable son and daughter, and believe me, with sincere esteem, &c. B. FRANKLIN.

FROM M. ROSENCRONE TO B. FRANKLIN.

Treaty between Denmark and the United States.

Translation.

Copenhagen, 8 July, 1783.

SIR,

It was with the greatest alacrity, that I laid before his Majesty the letter you did me the honor to write to me, as also the project of a treaty of amity and commerce that accompanied it. The King observed, with the greatest satisfaction, the assurances, contained in that letter, of the good disposition of Congress to form connexions of amity and commerce with his kingdoms, such connexions being equally conformable to the interests of the two States, and to his Majesty's sincere desire to cement, by every possible means, that harmony, union, and confidence, which he wishes to establish for ever between his crown and the United States.

The enclosed *Counter Project** differs in nothing essential from the project sent by you, being drawn up in all respects conformably to the same principles, which you will be certainly convinced of, Sir, by the note explaining the reasons for adding some articles, and only giving a different turn to others; so that I flatter myself, that I shall soon hear that you are perfectly

* See *Diplomatic Correspondenc.* Vol. IV. p. 115.

satisfied with them, having observed the most perfect reciprocity carefully established throughout.

As to the object mentioned in the letter with which you have honored me, you already know, Sir, his Majesty's generous intentions towards the individuals in question; and his Majesty is the more induced to avail himself of the first opportunity to manifest these intentions, as he thinks he may reasonably hope that Congress will also consider them as a distinguished proof of his friendship and esteem for that respectable body.

There remains nothing further for me to add, but that the King will adopt, with great pleasure, the most proper means to accelerate the conclusion of the treaty, which we have begun. For myself, it will be the most agreeable part of my office, Sir, to assist in perfecting such happy connexions with a minister of such universal reputation as yourself; and it is with sentiments of the most distinguished regard, that I have the honor to be, &c. ROSENCRONE.

FROM GIACOMO F. CROCCO TO B. FRANKLIN

Concerning a Treaty of Peace and Commerce with Morocco.

Cadiz, 15 July, 1783.

SIR,

His Imperial Majesty, the Emperor of Morocco, did me the honor to appoint me to be the bearer of his answer to the United Provinces of North America, with which he is willing to sign a treaty of peace and commerce, and in consequence has already given orders to his captains of men-of-war not to molest on the open seas the American vessels, which agreeable news I have already given to Mr. Richard Harrison. Accord-

ing to my instructions, I am to accompany to the court of Morocco the ambassador, that will be appointed to conclude the treaty of peace. I presume, that your Excellency is already acquainted, that the travelling expenses and other charges of ambassadors, or envoys, sent to Europe by the Emperor of Morocco, are to be paid by the court, or republic, that demands his friendship. In a few days I intend to set out for Madrid, where I will remain till I receive your Excellency's answer to this letter, directed to William Carmichael, the United States *Chargé d'Affaires* at the Court of Spain, who, I make no doubt, will receive orders to supply me with the money I may want on the occasion.

As soon as I arrive at Paris, I shall have the satisfaction to entertain at large your Excellency on the present negotiation, not doubting it will soon be concluded to the advantage of both courts. In the mean time I remain, most truly, Sir, &c.

GIACOMO FRANCESCO CROCCO.

P. S. I was obliged to call on a friend to write you this letter in English, otherwise I could only do it in the Italian language.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Justifies the Signing of the Treaty without communicating it to the French Court. — Confidence in France. — Free Trade. — Portugal. — Denmark. — Prussia and Saxony. — American Constitutions. — Barbary Powers. — Kindness of Mr. Wren to the American Prisoners in England.

Passy, 22 July, 1783.

Sir,

You have complained, sometimes with reason, of not hearing from your foreign ministers; we have had cause to make the same complaint, six full months having intervened between the latest date of your preceding letters and the receipt of those by Captain Barney. During all this time we were ignorant of the reception of the Provisional Treaty, and the sentiments of Congress upon it, which, if we had received sooner, might have forwarded the proceedings on the Definitive Treaty, and, perhaps, brought them to a conclusion at a time more favorable than the present. But these occasional interruptions of correspondence are the inevitable consequences of a state of war, and of such remote situations. Barney had a short passage, and arrived some days before Colonel Ogden, who also brought despatches from you, all of which are come safe to hand. We, the Commissioners, have in our joint capacity written a letter to you, which you will receive with this.

I shall now answer yours of March the 26th, May the 9th, and May the 31st.* It gave me great pleasure to learn by the first, that the news of peace diffused

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. IV. pp. 84, 107, 109.

general satisfaction. I will not now take it upon me to justify the apparent reserve, respecting this court, at the signature, which you disapprove. We have touched upon it in our general letter.* I do not see, however, that they have much reason to complain of that transaction. Nothing was stipulated to their prejudice, and none of the stipulations were to have force, but by a subsequent act of their own. I suppose, indeed, that they have not complained of it, or you would have sent us a copy of the complaint, that we might have answered it. I long since satisfied Count de Vergennes about it here. We did what appeared to all of us best at the time, and, if we have done wrong, the Congress will do right, after hearing us, to censure us. Their nomination of five persons to the service seems to mark, that they had some dependence on our joint judgment, since one alone could have made a treaty by direction of the French ministry as well as twenty.

I will only add, that, with respect to myself, neither the letter from M. de Marbois,† handed us through the British negotiators (a suspicious channel), nor the conversations respecting the fishery, the boundaries, the royalists, &c., recommending moderation in our demands, are of weight sufficient in my mind to fix an opinion, that this court wished to restrain us in obtaining any degree of advantage we could prevail on our enemies to accord; since those discourses are fairly resolvable, by supposing a very natural apprehension, that we, relying too much on the ability of France to continue the war in our favor, and supply us constantly with money, might insist on more advantages than the

* See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. X. p. 187.

† See above, p. 463.

English would be willing to grant, and thereby lose the opportunity of making peace, so necessary to all our friends.

I ought not, however, to conceal from you, that one of my colleagues is of a very different opinion from me in these matters. He thinks the French minister one of the greatest enemies of our country, that he would have straitened our boundaries, to prevent the growth of our people; contracted our fishery, to obstruct the increase of our seamen; and retained the royalists among us, to keep us divided; that he privately opposes all our negotiations with foreign courts, and afforded us, during the war, the assistance we received, only to keep it alive, that we might be so much the more weakened by it; that to think of gratitude to France is the greatest of follies, and that to be influenced by it would ruin us. He makes no secret of his having these opinions, expresses them publicly, sometimes in presence of the English ministers, and speaks of hundreds of instances which he could produce in proof of them. None, however, have yet appeared to me, unless the conversations and letter abovementioned are reckoned such.

If I were not convinced of the real inability of this court to furnish the further supplies we asked, I should suspect these discourses of a person in his station might have influenced the refusal; but I think they have gone no further than to occasion a suspicion, that we have a considerable party of Antigallicans in America, who are not Tories, and consequently to produce some doubts of the continuance of our friendship. As such doubts may hereafter have a bad effect, I think we cannot take too much care to remove them; and it is, therefore, I write this, to put you on your guard, (believing it my duty, though I know that I hazard by

it a mortal enmity), and to caution you respecting the insinuations of this gentleman against this court, and the instances he supposes of their ill will to us, which I take to be as imaginary as I know his fancies to be, that Count de Vergennes and myself are continually plotting against him, and employing the newswriters of Europe to depreciate his character, &c. But as Shakspeare says, "Trifles light as air," &c. I am persuaded, however, that he means well for his country, is always an honest man, often a wise one, but sometimes, and in some things, absolutely out of his senses.

When the commercial article, mentioned in yours of the 26th was struck out of our proposed preliminaries by the British ministry, the reason given was, that sundry acts of Parliament still in force were against it, and must be first repealed, which I believe was really their intention, and sundry bills were accordingly brought in for that purpose; but, new ministers with different principles succeeding, a commercial proclamation totally different from those bills has lately appeared. I send enclosed a copy of it. We shall try what can be done in the Definitive Treaty towards setting aside that proclamation; but, if it should be persisted in, it will then be a matter worthy the attentive discussion of Congress, whether it will be most prudent to retort with a similar regulation in order to force its repeal (which may possibly tend to bring on another quarrel), or to let it pass without notice, and leave it to its own inconvenience, or rather impracticability, in the execution, and to the complaints of the West India planters, who must all pay much dearer for our produce, under those restrictions.

I am not enough master of the course of our commerce to give an opinion on this particular question, and it does no behoove me to do it; yet I have seen

so much embarrassment and so little advantage in all the restraining and compulsive systems, that I feel myself strongly inclined to believe, that a State, which leaves all her ports open to all the world upon equal terms, will, by that means, have foreign commodities cheaper, sell its own productions dearer, and be on the whole the most prosperous. I have heard some merchants say, that there is ten per cent difference between *Will you buy?* and *Will you sell?* When foreigners bring us their goods, they want to part with them speedily, that they may purchase their cargoes and despatch their ships, which are at constant charges in our ports; we have then the advantage of their *Will you buy?* And when they demand our produce, we have the advantage of their *Will you sell?* And the concurring demands of a number also contribute to raise our prices. Thus both those questions are in our favor at home, against us abroad.

The employing, however, of our own ships and raising a breed of seamen among us, though it should not be a matter of so much private profit as some imagine, is nevertheless of political importance, and must have weight in considering this subject.

The judgment you make of the conduct of France in the peace, and the greater glory acquired by her moderation than even by her arms, appears to me perfectly just. The character of this court and nation seems, of late years, to be considerably changed. The ideas of aggrandizement by conquest are out of fashion, and those of commerce are more enlightened and more generous than heretofore. We shall soon, I believe, feel something of this in our being admitted to a greater freedom of trade with their Islands. The wise here think France great enough; and its ambition at present seems to be only that of justice and magna-

nimity towards other nations, fidelity and utility to its allies.

The ambassador at Portugal was much pleased with the proceedings relating to their vessel, which you sent me, and assures me they will have a good effect at his court. He appears extremely desirous of a treaty with our States; I have accordingly proposed to him the plan of one (nearly the same with that sent me for Sweden), and, after my agreeing to some alterations, he has sent it to his court for approbation. He told me at Versailles, last Tuesday, that he expected its return to him on Saturday next, and anxiously desired that I would not despatch our packet without it, that Congress might consider it, and, if approved, send a commission to me or some other minister to sign it.

I venture to go thus far in treating, on the authority only of a kind of general power, given formerly by a resolution of Congress to Messrs. Franklin, Deane, and Lee; but a special commission seems more proper to complete a treaty, and more agreeable to the usual forms of such business.

I am in just the same situation with Denmark; that court, by its minister here, has desired a treaty with us. I have proposed a plan formed on that sent me for Sweden; it had been under consideration some time at Copenhagen, and is expected here this week, so that I may possibly send that also by this conveyance. You will have seen by my letter to the Danish Prime Minister, that I did not forget the affair of the prizes. What I then wrote, produced a verbal offer made me here, of ten thousand pounds sterling, proposed to be given by his Majesty to the captors, if I would accept it as a full discharge of our demand. I could not do this, I said, because it was not more than a fifth part of the estimated value. In answer, I was told, that

the estimation was probably extravagant, that it would be difficult to come at the knowledge of their true value, and that, whatever they might be worth in themselves, they should not be estimated as of such value to us when at Bergen, since the English probably watched them, and might have retaken them in their way to America; at least, they were at the common risk of the seas and enemies, and the insurance was a considerable drawback; that this sum might be considered as so much saved for us by the King's interference; for that, if the English claimants had been suffered to carry the cause into the common courts, they must have recovered the prizes by the laws of Denmark; it was added, that the King's honor was concerned, that he sincerely desired our friendship, but he would avoid, by giving this sum in the form of a present to the captors, the appearance of its being exacted from him as the reparation of an injury, when it was really intended rather as a proof of his strong disposition to cultivate a good understanding with us.

I replied, that the value might possibly be exaggerated; but that we did not desire more than should be found just on inquiry, and that it was not difficult to learn from London what sums were insured upon the ships and cargoes, which would be some guide; and that a reasonable abatement might be made for the risk; but that the Congress could not, in justice to their mariners, deprive them of any part that was truly due to those brave men, whatever abatement they might think fit to make (as a mark of their regard for the King's friendship) of the part belonging to the public; that I had, however, no instructions or authority to make any abatement of any kind, and could, therefore, only acquaint Congress with the offer, and the reasons that accompanied it, which I promised to

state fully and candidly (as I have now done), and attend their orders; desiring only that it might be observed, we had presented our complaint with decency, that we had charged no fault on the Danish government, but what might arise from inattention or precipitancy, and that we had intimated no resentment, but had waited, with patience and respect, the King's determination, confiding, that he would follow the equitable disposition of his own breast, by doing us justice as soon as he could do it with conveniency; that the best and wisest princes sometimes erred, that it belonged to the condition of man, and was, therefore, inevitable, and that the true honor in such cases consisted, not in disowning or hiding the error, but in making ample reparation; that, though I could not accept what was offered on the terms proposed, our treaty might go on, and its articles be prepared and considered, and, in the mean time, I hoped his Danish Majesty would reconsider the offer, and make it more adequate to the loss we had sustained. Thus that matter rests; but I hourly expect to hear further, and perhaps may have more to say on it before the ship's departure.

I shall be glad to have the proceedings you mention respecting the brig *Providentia.* I hope the equity and justice of our admiralty courts respecting the property of strangers will always maintain their reputation; and I wish particularly to cultivate the disposition of friendship towards us, apparent in the late proceedings of Denmark, as the Danish Islands may be of use to our West India commerce, while the English impolitic restraints continue.

The Elector of Saxony, as I understand from his minister here, has thoughts of sending one to Congress, and proposing a treaty of commerce and amity with

us. Prussia has likewise an inclination to share in a trade with America, and the minister of that court, though he has not directly proposed a treaty, has given me a packet of lists of the several sorts of merchandise they can furnish us with, which he requests me to send to America for the information of our merchants.

I have received no answer yet from Congress to my request of being dismissed from their service. They should, methinks, reflect, that if they continue me here, the faults I may henceforth commit, through the infirmities of age, will be rather theirs than mine. I am glad my Journal afforded you any pleasure. I will, as you desire, endeavour to continue it. I thank you for the pamphlet; it contains a great deal of information respecting our finances. We shall, as you advise, avoid publishing it. But I see they are publishing it in the English papers. I was glad I had a copy authenticated by the signature of Secretary Thomson, by which I could assure Count de Vergennes, that the money contract I had made with him was ratified by Congress, he having just before expressed some uneasiness to me at its being so long neglected. I find it was ratified soon after it was received, but the ratification, except in that pamphlet, has not yet come to hand. I have done my best to procure the further loan directed by the resolution of Congress. It was not possible. I have written on that matter to Mr. Morris. I wish the rest of the estimates of losses and mischiefs were come to hand; they would still be of use.

Mr. Barclay has in his hands the affair of the *Alliance* and *Bon Homme Richard*. I will afford him all the assistance in my power, but it is a very perplexed business. That expedition, though for particular reasons under American commissions and colors, was car-

ried on at the King's expense, and under his orders. M. de Chaumont was the agent appointed by the Minister of Marine to make the outfit. He was also chosen by all the captains of the squadron, as appears by an instrument under their hands, to be their agent, receive, sell, and divide prizes, &c. The Crown bought two of them at public sale, and the money, I understand, is lodged in the hands of a responsible person at L'Orient. M. de Chaumont says he has given in his accounts to the Marine, and that he has no more to do with the affair, except to receive a balance due to him. That account, however, is I believe unsettled, and the absence of some of the captains is said to make another difficulty, which retards the completion of the business. I never paid or received any thing relating to that expedition, nor had any other concern in it, than barely ordering the *Alliance* to join the squadron, at M. de Sartine's request. I know not whether the other captains will not claim a share in what we may obtain from Denmark, though the prizes were made by the *Alliance*, when separate from the squadron. If so, that is another difficulty in the way of making abatement in our demand, without their consent.

I am sorry to find, that you have thoughts of quitting the service. I do not think your place can be easily well supplied. You mention, that an entire new arrangement, with respect to foreign affairs, is under consideration. I wish to know whether any notice is likely to be taken in it of my grandson. He has now gone through an apprenticeship of near seven years in the ministerial business, and is very capable of serving the States in that line, as possessing all the requisites of knowledge, zeal, activity, language, and address. He is well liked here, and Count de Vergennes has ex-

pressed to me in warm terms his very good opinion of him. The late Swedish ambassador, Count de Krutz, who has gone home to be Prime Minister, desired I would endeavour to procure his being sent to Sweden, with a public character, assuring me, that he should be glad to receive him there as our minister, and that he knew it would be pleasing to the King.* The present Swedish ambassador has also proposed the same thing to me, as you will see by a letter of his, which I enclose. One of the Danish ministers, M. Walterstorf, who will probably be sent in a public character to Congress, has also expressed his wish, that my grandson may be sent to Denmark. But it is not my custom to solicit employments for myself, or any of my family, and I shall not do it in this case. I only hope, that if he is not to be employed in your new arrangement, I may be informed of it as soon as possible, that, while I have strength left for it, I may accompany him in a tour to Italy, returning through Germany, which I think he may make to more advantage with me than alone, and which I have long promised to afford him, as a reward for his faithful service, and his tender filial attachment to me.

July 25th. While I was writing the above, M. Walterstorf came in, and delivered me a packet from M. Rosencrone, the Danish Prime Minister, containing the project of the treaty with some proposed alterations, and a paper of reasons in support of them.† Fearing that we should not have time to copy them, I send herewith the originals, relying on his promise to furnish me with copies in a few days. He seemed to think, that the interest of the merchants is concerned

* See the Swedish Ambassador's letter above, p. 526.

† See M. Rosencrone's letter, accompanying the papers here mentioned, p. 529.

in the immediate conclusion of the treaty, that they may form their plans of commerce, and wished to know whether I did not think my general power, above mentioned, sufficient for that purpose. I told him, I thought a particular commission more agreeable to the forms; but, if his Danish Majesty would be content for the present with the general authority, formerly given to me, I believed I might venture to act upon it, reserving, by a separate article, to Congress the power of shortening the term, in case any part of the treaty should not be to their mind, unless the alteration of such part should hereafter be agreed on.

The Prince de Deux-Ponts was lately at Paris, and applied to me for information respecting a commerce which is desired between the Electorate of Bavaria and America. I have it also from a good hand at the court of Vienna, that the Emperor is desirous of establishing a commerce with us from Trieste as well as Flanders, and would make a treaty with us, if proposed to him. Since our trade is laid open, and no longer a monopoly to England, all Europe seems desirous of sharing in it, and for that purpose to cultivate our friendship. That it may be better known everywhere, what sort of people, and what kind of government they will have to treat with, I prevailed with our friend, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, to translate our book of Constitutions into French, and I presented copies to all the foreign ministers. I send you one herewith. They are much admired by the politicians here, and it is thought will induce considerable emigrations of substantial people from different parts of Europe to America. It is particularly a matter of wonder, that, in the midst of a cruel war raging in the bowels of our country, our sages should have the firmness of mind to sit down calmly and form such com-

plete plans of government. They add considerably to the reputation of the United States.

I have mentioned above the port of Trieste, with which we may possibly have a commerce, and I am told that many useful productions and manufactures of Hungary may be had extremely cheap there. But it becomes necessary first to consider how our Mediterranean trade is to be protected from the corsairs of Barbary. You will see by the enclosed copy of a letter* I received from Algiers, the danger two of our ships escaped last winter. I think it not improbable that those rovers may be privately encouraged by the English to fall upon us, and to prevent our interference in the carrying trade; for I have in London heard it is a maxim among the merchants, that, if *there were no Algiers, it would be worth England's while to build one.* I wonder, however, that the rest of Europe do not combine to destroy those nests, and secure commerce from their future piracies.

I made the Grand Master of Malta a present of one of our medals in silver, writing him a letter, of which I enclose a copy;† and I believe our people will be kindly received in his ports; but that is not sufficient; and perhaps, now we have peace, it will be proper to send ministers, with suitable presents, to establish a friendship with the Emperor of Morocco, and the other Barbary States, if possible. Mr. Jay will inform you of some steps, that have been taken by a person at Alicant, without authority, towards a treaty with that Emperor. I send you herewith a few more of the abovementioned medals, which have given great satisfaction to this court and nation. I should be glad to know how they are liked with you.

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* See above, p. 506. † See above, p. 508.

Our people, who were prisoners in England, are now all discharged. During the whole war, those who were in Forton prison, near Portsmouth, were much befriended by the constant charitable care of Mr. Wren, a Presbyterian minister there, who spared no pains to assist them in their sickness and distress, by procuring and distributing among them the contributions of good Christians, and prudently dispensing the allowance I made them, which gave him a great deal of trouble, but he went through it cheerfully. I think some public notice should be taken of this good man. I wish the Congress would enable me to make him a present, and that some of our universities would confer upon him the degree of Doctor.*

* This suggestion was not overlooked. Congress sent him a vote of thanks for his humane and benevolent attention to the American prisoners, which was conveyed to him in a letter from the President. The degree of Doctor in Divinity was conferred upon him by the College at Princeton, in New Jersey.

Dr. Thomas Wren died at Portsmouth, on the 30th of October, 1787, at the age of sixty-three. A well written obituary notice of him is contained in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, for November of that year. The writer says; "Few men can be mentioned, who have been more distinguished by piety and virtue, by purity of mind and amiableness of behaviour. In his theological opinions he was liberal and candid. But the particular situation of Dr. Wren, joined with the ardent benevolence of his disposition, brought him forward into public notice and public usefulness. When American prisoners were continually carried into Portsmouth during the late war, and many of them were in the most wretched condition, he was struck with compassion, and flew to their relief. He contributed most liberally to their necessities out of his own small fortune, and sought the assistance of his friends. One of his first objects was to procure, from his acquaintances in the metropolis and other places, a large supply of clothes, these being particularly wanted. After this, he set on foot that subscription for the relief of the prisoners, which extended so liberally through the kingdom. As he was the cause, so he was the distributor, of the bounties that were raised; and this work employed his constant attention for several years. The management of the affair not only required his daily visits to the captives, but engaged him in a very large correspondence, both at home and abroad. It must be particularly observed, that in the whole busi-

The Duke of Manchester, who has always been our friend in the House of Lords, is now here as ambassador from England. I dine with him to-day, 26th, and, if any thing of importance occurs, I will add it in a postscript. Be pleased to present my dutiful respects to the Congress, assure them of my most faithful services, and believe me to be, with great and sincere esteem, Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

TO SIR JOSEPH BANKS.

On the Return of Peace.

Passy, 27 July, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

I received your very kind letter by Dr. Blagden, and esteem myself much honored by your friendly remembrance. I have been too much and too closely engaged in public affairs, since his being here, to enjoy all the benefit of his conversation you were so good as to intend me. I hope soon to have more leisure, and to spend a part of it in those studies, that are much more agreeable to me than political operations.

I join with you most cordially in rejoicing at the return of peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable creatures, have reason and sense enough to set-

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ness Dr. Wren was actuated by the purest principles of humanity. His conduct was as prudent as it was beneficent. It was not only by the permission, but with the approbation, of the government, that he had access to the prisoners, and dispensed the contributions to their necessities. Much might be added in his praise; but it will be sufficient to sum up this sketch of his character by saying, that it comprised in it piety of mind, benevolence of heart, simplicity of manners, and cheerfulness of temper."

tle their differences without cutting throats; for, in my opinion, *there never was a good war, or a bad peace.* What vast additions to the conveniences and comforts of living might mankind have acquired, if the money spent in wars had been employed in works of public utility! What an extension of agriculture, even to the tops of our mountains; what rivers rendered navigable, or joined by canals; what bridges, aqueducts, new roads, and other public works, edifices, and improvements, rendering England a complete paradise, might have been obtained by spending those millions in doing good, which in the last war have been spent in doing mischief; in bringing misery into thousands of families, and destroying the lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labor!

I am pleased with the late astronomical discoveries made by our Society.* Furnished as all Europe now is with academies of science, with nice instruments and the spirit of experiment, the progress of human knowledge will be rapid, and discoveries made, of which we have at present no conception. I begin to be almost sorry I was born so soon, since I cannot have the happiness of knowing what will be known one hundred years hence.

I wish continued success to the labors of the Royal Society, and that you may long adorn their chair; being, with the highest esteem, dear Sir, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. Dr. Blagden will acquaint you with the experiment of a vast globe sent up into the air, much talked of here, and which, if prosecuted, may furnish means of new knowledge.

* The Royal Society of London.

FROM THE POPE'S NUNCIO TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

28 July, 1783.

The Apostolical Nuncio has the honor to send Mr. Franklin the enclosed note, which he requests he will be pleased to forward to the Congress of the United States of North America, and support it with his credit.

Note.

Before the Revolution, which has just been completed in North America, the Catholics and missionaries of those provinces depended, as to their spiritual concerns, on the Apostolical Vicar, resident in London. It is well known that this arrangement can no longer exist; but, as it is essential that the Catholic subjects of the United States should have an ecclesiastic to govern them in their religious concerns, the Congregation *de Propagandâ Fide* existing at Rome, for the establishment and conservation of missions, has come to the determination of proposing to Congress to establish, in some city of the United States of North America, one of their Catholic subjects, with the powers of Apostolical Vicar, and in the character of Bishop, or simply in the quality of Apostolical Prefect.

The establishment of an Apostolical Vicar Bishop appears the most eligible, the more so as the Catholic subjects of the United States would find themselves in a situation to receive confirmation and orders in their own country, without being obliged to go for that purpose to the country of a foreign power. And, as it might sometimes happen, that among the subjects of the United States, there might be no person in a situation to be charged with the spiritual government, either as Bishop or Apostolical Prefect, it would

be necessary, in such circumstances, that Congress should consent to choose him from among the subjects of a foreign nation the most friendly to the United States.

TO COUNT DE VERGENNES.

Passy, 16 August, 1783.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform your Excellency, that the English ministry do not agree to any of the propositions that have been made, either by us or by their minister here; and they have sent over a plan for the definitive treaty, which consists merely of the preliminaries formerly signed, with a short introductory paragraph, and another at the conclusion, confirming and establishing the said preliminary articles. My colleagues seem inclined to sign this with Mr. Hartley, and so to finish the affair. I am, with respect, Sir, your Excellency's, &c.

B. Franklin.

FROM M. DE RAYNEVAL TO B. FRANKLIN.

Translation.

Versailles, 29 August, 1783.

Sir,

I have informed the Count de Vergennes of the difficulty, which Mr. Hartley has made to signing at Versailles; and this minister has directed me to say, that nothing ought to prevent your signing at Paris on Wednesday next, the day proposed for the signature of the other treaties; but I request you to fix the hour with Mr. Hartley at nine o'clock in the morning, and to send here an express immediately after your signature is completed.

M. de Vergennes is desirous of being informed of the completion of your labors at the same time with his own. You receive for Wednesday a note of invitation, as well as for your colleagues and Mr. Hartley; I presume that the latter will make no difficulty. I have the honor to be, Sir, with perfect consideration, &c.

DE RAYNEVAL.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Passy, 31 August, 1783.

SIR,

After a continued course of treating for nine months, the English ministry have at length come to a resolution to lay aside, for the present, all the new propositions, that have been made and agreed to, their own as well as ours; and they offer to sign again as a Definitive Treaty, the articles of November the 30th, 1782, the ratifications of which have already been exchanged. We have agreed to this, and on Wednesday next, the third of September, it will be signed, with all the definitive treaties, establishing a general peace, which may God long continue. I am, with great respect, &c.

B. FRANKLIN.

END OF VOL. IX.